



THE LATE MR COOPER,
AS RECORDED "THE TITMURD".

*Engraved by Thomson from an original Painting by C. H. Smith
in the possession of John Howard Payne Esq.*

Published 1818 by Simpkin & Marshall Stationers & Schoolbooksellers

THE
NEW ENGLISH DRAMA,

WITH

PREFATORY REMARKS,

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCHES, AND NOTES,

Critical and Explanatory;

*Being the only Edition existing which is faithfully marked with
the*

STAGE BUSINESS, AND STAGE DIRECTIONS,

As Performed

At the Theatres Royal.

By W. OXBERRY, COMEDIAN.

VOLUME THIRD,

CONTAINING

RICHARD THE THIRD.—HAMLET.—IS HE JEALOUS.
ALEXANDER THE GREAT.—WAY TO KEEP HIM.

London.

PUBLISHED FOR THE PROPRIETORS BY W. SIMPKIN AND
R. MARSHALL, STATIONERS' COURT, LUDGATE-STREET;
AND C. CHAPPLE, 66, FALL-MALL.

1818.

**W. OXBERRY AND CO. PRINTERS,
8, WHITE HART YARD.**

Oxberry's Edition.

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A

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By W. Shakspeare.

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**From the Press of W. Oxberry and Co.
8, White-Hart Yard.**

Remarks.

KING RICHARD THE THIRD.

"King Richard the Third" is among the most popular of Shakespeare's tragedies, though far inferior to many other efforts of the same mighty master. The reason of this preference is perhaps to be sought in the common passions which it exhibits, and the obvious means by which those passions are made successful. Ambition, or in other words, the desire of acquiring something more than is allotted to us, is a passion proper to all men; no matter how high or low the object, the affection is the same. Here then is the point of contact between *Richard* and his audience, and the means that he employs add strongly to the impression: they are indeed dexterous and daring in the highest degree, but we see them only in their effects; the preparation for his gigantic projects, which must, from its nature, be too subtle for common apprehensions, is kept out of sight; we are hurried from one grand effect to another, without pause, without argument; and as the duller souls can admire great consequences, though few can appreciate the means, we follow *Richard* with undivided attention. When at last his crimes have multiplied beyond the bounds of endurance, and disgust is beginning to arise, the poet opens a new source of pleasure in his death.

The characters of *Lady Anne* and *Buckingham*, though obscured by the splendid iniquity of *Richard*, are drawn with wonderful accuracy and power. The first more particularly, is seldom considered as such a creation should be considered; her very failings endear her to us: weak, but not vicious; changeable, but not deficient in affection, she is, of all objects, the most calculated for tragic pathos; her miserable fate is the natural consequence of her errors, but those errors are so skilfully touched, that they only add to our compassion. *Buckingham*, proud, high-minded, and selfish,

is the portrait of half mankind ; with all the lesser vices of life he is familiar ; he goes on quickly through a course of iniquity undisturbed ; no feeling of gratitude, or honour, or pity, stops him, till in the end, murder, the last link in the chain, stares him in the face, and even his selfishness is aroused ; but even here, he acts from impulse, and not from any exertion of the understanding ; his vices and virtues are the effect of habit.

Of Cibber's alteration it is scarcely necessary to say much ; he has improved the play, but he has destroyed the poem. Shakspeare had originally conducted the plot with sufficient abruptness, but this is tenfold increased under the hands of Cibber : still he deserves no little credit, and if the soliloquy on conscience be really his production, and of this there seems no rational cause for doubt, Pope's snarling criticism, in the *Dunciad*, reflects disgrace upon himself and not his victim ; but Pope was an ungenerous enemy a worse friend : on the one he would trample when fallen, and the other he would deceive when trusting.

Costume.

GLOSTER.—First dress. Scarlet doublet, trunks, hose, hat, cloak, and russet boots.—Second dress.—Black ditto, ditto, trimmed with gold, crimson velvet robe, white hose, shoes, and plush hat.—Third dress.—Armour body, and hat.

KING HENRY.—Purple robe and tunic richly embroidered, the robe trimmed with ermine, and a tippet of ermine.

PRINCE OF WALES.—First dress.—White satin tunic, crimson velvet robe, Ibid.—Second dress.—Black tunic, Ibid.

* **DUKE OF YORK.**—First dress.—White satin tunic, hose and shoes.—Second dress.—Black tunic, Ibid.

BUCKINGHAM.—Black velvet robe, and fawn coloured tunic, richly embroidered.

NORFOLK.—Scarlet tunic richly embroidered, breast-plate and helmet.

OXFORD.—First Dress.—Green robe and tunic embroidered.—Second dress.—Tunic, breast-plate and helmet.

RICHMOND.—Buff tunic, scarlet pantaloons, breast-plate, helmet, russet boots, &c.

STANLEY.—First dress.—Purple robe, orange coloured tunic richly embroidered, hat and feathers.—Second dress.—Tunic, breast-plate and helmet.

LIEUTENANT.—Green, Ibid.

LORD MAYOR.—Robe and tunic.

CATESBY.—First dress.—Light blue velvet robe, light brown tunic, embroidered.—Second dress.—Tunic and breast-plate.

RATCLIFF.—First dress.—Black velvet tunic embroidered.—Second dress.—Breast-plate and helmet.

TRESSEL.—Dark green, Ibid.

BLUNT.—Crimson, Ibid.

Richard's Soldiers, Ibid.

Richmond's Soldiers, Grey, Ibid.

Officers, coloured tunics to correspond with the Soldiers.

QUEEN.—First dress.—White cloth, embroidered with gold, large sleeves hanging from the wrists, shoulder robe of the same; white crape handkerchief, embroidered with gold, and tiara of jewels.—Second dress.—Black velvet, and crape robe.

LADY ANNE.—Black velvet dress, black crape handkerchief, bugle tiara.

DUCHESS OF YORK.—Black velvet dress and robe, crape handkerchief, and bugle tiara.

Four Ladies,—dresses, &c. to correspond.

Persons Represented.

	<i>Drury-lane.</i>	<i>Covent-garden.</i>
<i>King Henry the Sixth.....</i>	Mr. Pope.	Mr. Egerton.
<i>Prince of Wales.....</i>	Miss C. Carr.	Miss Boden.
<i>Duke of York.....</i>	Miss G. Carr.	Miss C. Boden.
<i>Richard, Duke of Gloucester..</i>	Mr. Kean.	Mr. Macready.
<i>Duke of Buckingham.....</i>	Mr. Holland.	Mr. Terry.
<i>Duke of Norfolk.....</i>	Mr. Thompson.	Mr. Comer.
<i>Richmond.....</i>	Mr. Elliston.	Mr. Abbott.
<i>Lord Stanley ..</i>	Mr. Powell.	Mr. Chapman.
<i>Catesby.....</i>	Mr. Hamblin.	Mr. Claremont.
<i>Ratcliff.....</i>	Mr. Ellhott.	Mr. Treby.
<i>Oxford.....</i>	Mr. Coveney.	Mr. Menage.
<i>Blunt.....</i>	Mr. Read.	Mr. King.
<i>Lieutenant of the Tower....</i>	Mr. Foote.	Mr. Jefferies.
<i>Tressel.....</i>	Mr. Barnard.	Mr. Connor.
<i>Lord Mayor.....</i>	Mr. Meredith.	Mr. Atkins.
<i>Turret.....</i>	Mr. Vining.	Mr. Norris.
<i>Forest.....</i>	Mr. Hudson.	Mr. White.
<i>Dighton.....</i>	Mr. Moreton.	Mr. Louis.
<i>Officer.....</i>	Mr. Buxton.	Mr. Howell.
<i>Queen.....</i>	Mrs. Glover.	Mrs. Faucit.
<i>Lady Anne.....</i>	Mrs. W. West.	Mrs. Yates.
<i>Duchess of York.....</i>	Mrs. Knight.	Mrs. Connor.



Time of Representation.

The time this piece takes in representation, is three hours and fourteen minutes. The first act occupies the space of forty minutes;—the second, thirty-nine;—the third, thirty-five;—the fourth, forty-two;—the fifth, thirty-eight. The half price commences, generally, at about nine.

Stage Directions.

By R.H.....	is meant.....	Right Hand.
L.H.....		Left Hand.
S.E.....		Second Entrance.
U.E.....		Upper Entrance.
M.D.....		Middle Door.
D.F.....		Door in flat.
R.H.D.....		Right Hand Door.
L.H.D.....		Left Hand Door.



KING RICHARD III.

ACT I.

SCENE I.—*A View of the Keep, and Gardens of the White Tower.*

Enter LIEUTENANT and OFFICER, R.H.

Licut. HAS King Henry walk'd forth this morning?

Off. No, sir ; but it is near his hour.

Lieut. At any time when you see him here,
Let no stranger into the garden ;
I would not have him star'd at. (*Officer crosses behind, to L.H.*) See, who's that,

Now ent'ring at the gate. (*Knocking within, L.H.*)

Off. Sir, the Lord Stanley.

Lieut. Leave me.—

[*Exit Off.*, L.H.]

Enter LORD STANLEY, L.H.

My noble lord, you're welcome to the Tower :
I heard last night you late arrived with news
Of Edward's victory, to his joyful queen.

Stan. Yes, sir, and I am proud to be the man
That first brought home the last of civil broils ;
The houses now of York and Lancaster,

Like bloody brothers fighting for a birth-right,
 No more shall wound the parent that would part 'em ;
 Edward now sits secure on England's throne.

Lieut. Near Tewksbury, my lord, I think they
 fought :

Has the enemy lost any men of note ?

Stan. Sir, I was posted home,
 Ere an account was taken of the slain ;
 But as I left the field, a proclamation
 From the king was made in search of Edward,
 Son to your prisoner, king Henry the Sixth,
 Which gave reward to those discov'ring him,
 And him his life if he'd surrender.

Lieut. That brave young prince, I fear's unlike his
 father,
 Too high of heart to brook submissive life :
 This will be heavy news to Henry's ear,
 For on this battle's cast his all was set.

Stan. King Henry and ill-fortune are familiar ;
 He ever threw with an indifferent hand,
 But never yet was known to lose his patience :
 How does he pass the time, in his confinement ?

Lieut. As one whose wishes never reach'd a crown ;
 The king seems dead in him,—but, as a man,
 He sighs sometimes in want of liberty.
 Sometimes he reads, and walks, and wishes
 That fate had bless'd him with a humbler birth,
 Not to have felt the falling from a throne.

Stan. Were it not possible to see this king ?
 They say he'll freely talk with Edward's friends,
 And even treats them with respect and honour.

Lieut. This is his usual time of walking forth,
 (For he's allowed the freedom of the garden,)
 After his morning prayer ; he seldom fails :
 Behind this arbour we unseen may stand
 Awhile to observe him. *(They retire, L.H.)*

Enter KING HENRY, R.H.

King H. By this time the decisive blow is struck,

Either my queen and son are bless'd with victory,
 Or I'm the cause no more of civil broils.
 Would I were dead, if heav'n's good-will were so,
 For what is in this world but grief and care?
 What noise and bustle do kings make to find it;
 When life's but a short chace, our game content,
 Which most pursu'd is most compell'd to fly;
 And he that mounts him on the swiftest hope,
 Shall often run his courser to a stand;
 While the poor peasant from some distant hill,
 Undanger'd, and at ease, views all the sport,
 And secs content take shelter in his cottage.

Stan. He seems extremely moved.

Lieut. Does he know you?

Stan. No, nor would I have him.

Lieut. We'll show ourselves.

(They come forward, L.H.)

King H. Why, there's another check to proud ambition;

That man received his charge from me, and now
 I am his prisoner,—he locks me to my rest.
 Such an unlook'd for change who could suppose,
 That saw him kneel to kiss the hand that rais'd him!
 But that I should not now complain of,
 Since I to that, 'tis possible may owe
 His civil treatment of me.—'Morrow, Lieutenant:
 Is any news arriv'd?—Who's that with you?

Lieut. A gentleman that came last night express
 From Tewksbury.—We've had a battle.

King H. Comes he to me with letters, or advice?

Lieut. Sir, he's king Edward's officer, your foe.

King H. Then he wont flatter me.—You're welcome, sir;
(Lieut. retires a little, L.H.)

Not less because you are king Edward's friend,
 For I have almost learn'd myself to be so;
 Could I but once forget I was a king,
 I might be truly happy, and his subject.
 You've gained a battle; is't not so?

Stan. We have, sir,—how, will reach your ear too soon.

King H. If to my loss, it can't too soon,—pr
speak,

For fear makes mischief greater than it is.

My queen ! my son ! say, sir, are they living ?

Stan. Since my arrival, sir, another post
Came in, and brought us word your queen and son
Were prisoners now at Tewksbury.

King H. Heaven's will be done ! the hunters have
'em now,

And I have only sighs and prayers to help 'em.

Stan. King Edward, sir, depends upon his sword ;
Yet prays heartily when the battle's won ;
And soldiers love a bold and active leader.
Fortune, like women, will be close pursued ;
The English are high mettled, sir, and 'tis
No easy part to fit 'em well ;—King Edward
Feels their temper, and 'twill be hard to throw him.

King H. Alas ! I thought them men, and rather
hop'd

To win their hearts by mildness than severity.

My soul was never formed for cruelty :

In my eyes justice has seem'd bloody ;—

When on the city gates I have beheld

A traitor's quarters parching in the sun,

My blood has turn'd with horror at the sight ;

I took 'em down, and buried with his limbs

The memory of the dead man's deeds ;—perhaps

That pity made me look less terrible,

Giving the mind of weak rebellion spirit ;

For kings are put in trust for all mankind,

And when themselves take injuries, who is safe ?

If so, I have deserv'd these frowns of fortune.

Enter OFFICER, L.H.

Off. Sir, here's a gentleman brings a warrant
For his access to king Henry's presence.

Lieut. I come to him.

[*Exit Officer, L.*]

Stan. His business may require your privacy ;
I'll leave you, sir, wishing you all the good

That can be wish'd,—not wronging him I serve.

King H. Farewell!

[*Exeunt Stanley and Lieutenant, L.H.*]

Who can this be?—A sudden coldness,
Like the damp hand of death, has seized my limbs;
I fear some heavy news!—

Re-enter LIEUTENANT, L.H.

Who is it, good Lieutenant?

Lieut. A gentleman, sir, from Tewksbury; he seems

A melancholy messenger,—for when I ask'd
What news, his answer was a deep-fetch'd sigh;
I would not urge him, but I fear 'tis fatal.

[*Exit, L.H.*]

King H. Fatal indeed! his brow's the title page,
That speaks the nature of a tragic volume.—

Enter TRESSEL, L.H.

Say, friend, how does my queen? My son?
Thou tremblest, and the whiteness of thy cheek
Is apter than thy tongue to tell thy errand,
Ev'n such a man, so faint, so spiritless,
So dull, so dead in look, so woe-begone,
Drew Priam's curtain in the dead of night;
And would have told him half his Troy was burn'd:
But Priam found the fire ere he his tongue,
And I my poor son's death ere thou relat'st it.
Now would'st thou say,—your son did thus and thus,
And thus your queen! so fought the valiant Oxford;
Stopping my greedy ear with their bold deeds;
But, in the end, (to stop my ear indeed,)
Thou hast a sigh to blow away this praise,
Ending with,—queen and son, and all are dead.

Tres. Your queen yet lives, and many of your
friends:

But for my lord your son—

King H. Why, he is dead!—yet speak, I charge thee!

Tell thou thy master his suspicion lies,
And I will take it as a kind disgrace,
And thank thee well, for doing me such wrong.

Tres. Would it were wrong to say; but, sir, your fears are true.

King H. Yet, for all this, say not my son is dead.

Tres. Sir, I am sorry I must force you to
Believe, what would to heav'n I had not seen :
But in this last battle near Tewksbury,
Your son, whose active spirit lent a fire
Ev'n to the dullest peasant in our camp,
Still made his way where danger stood to oppose him.
A braver youth, of more courageous heat,
Ne'er spurr'd his courser at the trumpet's sound.
But who can rule the uncertain chance of war?
In fine, king Edward won the bloody field,
Where both your queen and son were made his prisoners.

King H. Yet hold : for oh ! this prologue lets me in

To a most fatal tragedy to come.

Died he a prisoner say'st thou? How? by grief?
Or by the bloody hands of those that caught him?

Tres. After the fight, Edward in triumph ask'd
To see the captive prince;—the prince was brought,
Whom Edward roughly chid for bearing arms;
Asking what reparation he could make
For having stirr'd his subjects to rebellion?
Your son, impatient of such taunts, replied,
Bow like a subject, proud ambitious York,
While I, now speaking with my father's mouth,
Propose the self-same rebel words to thee,
Which, traitor, thou would'st have me answer to;
From these, more words arose, till in the end,
King Edward swell'd with what the unhappy prince
At such a time too freely spoke, his gauntlet
In his young face with indignation struck;
At which crook'd Richard, Clarence, and the rest,

urged their fatal daggers in his heart.

... bloody state I saw him on the earth,

From whence with life he never more sprung up.

King H. Oh ! had'st thou stabb'd at every word's deliverance

Sharp poniards in my flesh, while this was told,
Thy wounds had given less anguish than thy words.

Oh heav'n ! methinks I see my tender lamb
Gasp'g beneath the rav'nous wolves' fell gripe !

But say, did all ;—did they all strike him, say'st thou ?

Tres. All, sir ; but the first wound duke Richard gave.

King H. There let him stop ; be that his last of ills !

Oh ! barbarous act ! inhospitable men !

Against the rigid laws of arms, to kill him !

Was't not enough his hope of birth-right gone,

But must your hate be levell'd at his life ?

Nor could his father's wrongs content you ;

Nor could a father's grief dissuade the deed ?

You have no children !—butchers, if you had,
The thought of them would sure have stirr'd remorse.

Tres. Take comfort, sir, and hope a better day.

King H. Oh ! who can hold a fire in his hand,
By thinking on the frosty Caucasus ?

Or wallow naked in December's snow,

By bare remembrance of the summer's heat ?

Away ;—by heaven I shall abhor his sight,

Whoever bids me be of comfort more !

If thou wilt soothe my sorrows then I'll thank thee ;

Ay, now thou'rt kind indeed ! these tears oblige me.

Tres. Alas ! my lord, I fear more evils towards you.

King H. Why, let it come, I scarce shall feel it now :

My present woes have beat me to the ground :

And my hard fate can make me fall no lower.

What can it be ?—Give it its ugliest shape ;—

Oh ! my poor boy !

Tres. A word does that, it comes in Gloster's form.

King H. Frightful indeed ! give me the worst that threatens.

Tres. After the murder of your son, stern Richard,
As if unsated with the wounds he had given,
With unwash'd hands went from his friends in haste ;
And being asked by Clarence of the cause,
He, low'ring cried, brother, I must to the Tower ;
I've business there ; excuse me to the king :
Before you reach the town, expect some news :
This said, he vanish'd,—and I hear's arrived.

King H. Why then the period of my woes is set !
For ills but thought by him are half perform'd.

Enter LIEUTENANT, with an Order, L.H.

Lieut. Forgive me, sir, what I'm compell'd t'obey :
An order for your close confinement.

King H. Whence comes it, good Lieutenant ?

Lieut. Sir, from the duke of Gloster.

King H. Good night to all then ;—I obey it.

(Lieut. retires a little, R.H.)

And now, good friend, suppose me on my death-bed,
And take of me thy last, short-living leave.

Nay, keep thy tears till thou hast seen me dead ;

And when in tedious winter nights, with good

Old folks thou sitt'st up late

To hear 'em tell the dismal tales

Of times long past, ev'n now with woe remember'd,

Before thou bidd'st good night, to quit their grief,

Tell thou the lamentable fall of me,

And send thy hearers weeping to their beds.

[Exeunt King Henry, and Lieut. R.H. Tressel, L.H.]

SCENE II.—*The Entrance to the Inner Ward.*

Enter GLOSTER, L.H.

Glos. Now is the winter of our discontent

(Made glorious summer by the sun* of York ;
 And all the clouds, that lower'd upon our house,
 In the deep bosom of the ocean buried.
 Now are our brows bound with victorious wreaths,
 Our bruised arms hung up for monuments ;
 Our stern alarums are chang'd to merry meetings ;
 Our dreadful marches to delightful measures.
 Grim-visag'd war has smooth'd his wrinkled front ;
 And now,—instead of mounting barbed steeds,
 To fright the souls of fearful adversaries,—
 He capers nimbly in a lady's chamber,
 To the lascivious pleasing of a lute ;
 But I,—that am not shap'd for sportive tricks,
 Nor made to court an amorous looking-glass ;
 I,—that am rudely stamp'd, and want love's majesty,
 To strut before a wanton ambling nymph ;
 I,—that am curtail'd of man's fair proportion.
 Cheated of feature by dissembling nature,
 Deform'd, unfinish'd, sent before my time
 Into this breathing world, scarce half made up,
 And that so lamely, and unfashionable,
 That dogs bark at me, as I halt by them ;—
 Why I,—in this weak, piping time of peace,
 Have no delight to pass away my hours,
 Unless to see my shadow in the sun,
 And descant on my own deformity :
 Then, since this earth affords no joy to me,
 But to command, to check, and o'erbear such
 As are of happier person than myself ;
 Why then, to me this restless world's but hell,
 Till this mis-shapen trunk's aspiring head
 Be circled in a glorious diadem ;—
 But then 'tis fixed on such a height ; oh ! I
 Must stretch the utmost reaching of my soul.
 I'll climb betimes, without remorse or dread,
 And my first step shall be on Henry's head.

[Exit, R.H.]

* Alluding to the cognizance of Edward IV. which was a *sun*,
 in memory of the *three suns* which are said to have appeared at the
 battle which he gained over the Lancastrians, at Mortimer's Cross.

SCENE III.—*King Henry's Chamber.*—KING HENRY
discovered sleeping.

Enter LIEUTENANT, R.H.D.

Lieut. Asleep so soon, but sorrow minds no seasons,

The morning, noon, and night, with her's the same ;
She's fond of any hour that yield's repose.

King H. (Waking.) Who's there ! Lieutenant : is it you ? Come hither !

Lieut. You shake, my lord, and look affrighted.

King H. Oh ! I have had the fearfull'st dream :
such sights,

That, as I live,

I would not pass another hour so dreadful,
Though 'twere to buy a world of happy days.

Reach me a book ;—I'll try if reading can

Divert these melancholy thoughts.—(*Lieut. gives him a book which he takes from the table.*)

Enter GLOSTER, R.H.D.

Glos. Good day, my lord ; what, at your book so hard ?

I disturb you. (*Lieut. advances to R.H.D.*)

King H. You do indeed.

Glos. (To Lieut.) Friend, leave us to ourselves, we must confer.

King H. What bloody scene has Roscius now act ?
[*Exit Lieut. R.H.D.*]

Glos. Suspicion always haunts the guilty mind ;
The thief does fear each bush an officer.

King H. Where thieves without controlment rob and kill,
The traveller does fear each bush a thief ;
The poor bird that has been already lim'd,
With trembling wings misdoubts of every bush
And I, the hapless mate of one sweet bird,
Have now the fatal object in my eye,

By whom my young one bled, was caught, and kill'd.

Glos. Why what a peevish fool was that of Crete,
That taught his son the office of a fowl !
And yet for all his wings, the fool was drown'd :
Thou should'st have taught thy boy his prayers alone,
And then he had not broke his neck with climbing.

King H. Ah ! kill me with thy weapon, not thy words ;

My breast can better brook thy dagger's point,
Than can my ears that piercing story ;

• But wherefore dost thou come ? Is't for my life ?

Glos. Think'st thou I am an executioner ?

King H. If murdering innocents be executing,
Then thou'rt the worst of executioners.

Glos. Thy son I kill'd for his presumption.

King H. Had'st thou been kill'd when first thou
didst presume,

Thou had'st not lived to kill a son of mine :

But thou wert born to massacre mankind.

How many old men's sighs, and widows' moans ;

How many orphan's water-standing eyes ;

Men for their sons, wives for their husband's fate,

And children for their parent's timeless death,

Will rue the hour that ever thou wert born !

The owl shriek'd at thy birth, an evil sign !

The night-crow cry'd, foreboding luckless times ;

Dogs howl'd, and hideous tempests shook down trees

The raven rook'd her on the chimney top,

And chattering pies in dismal discord sung ;

Thy mother felt more than a mother's pain,

And yet brought forth less than a mother's hope.

Teeth had'st thou in thy head when thou wert born,

Which plainly said, thou can'st to bite mankind ;

And if the rest be true which I have heard,

Thou can'st—

Glos. I'll hear no more ;—die, prophet, in thy
speech ;

For this, among the rest, was I ordain'd. (*Stabs him.*)

King H. Oh ! and for much more slaughter after
this ;

Just heav'n forgive my sins, and pardon thee !
(*Dies.*)

Glos. What ! will the aspiring blood of Lancaster
Sink in the ground ?—I thought it would have
mounted.—

See how my sword weeps for the poor king's death.

Oh, may such purple tears be always shed,

From those that wish the downfall of our house !

If any spark of life be yet remaining,

Down, down to hell, and say I sent thee thither ;

(*Stabs him.*)

I, that have neither pity, love, nor fear.

Indeed, 'tis true what Henry told me of ;

For I have often heard my mother say,

I came into the world with my legs forward ;

The midwife wonder'd, and the women cry'd,

Good heaven bless us ! he is born with teeth !

And so I was, which plainly signified,

That I should snarl, and bite, and play the dog.

Then since the heav'ns have shap'd my body so,

Let hell make crook'd my mind to answer it !

I have no brother, am like no brother,

And this word love, which grey-beards call divine,

Be resident in men like one another,

And not in me ;—I am,—myself alone.

Clarence, beware, thou keep'st me from the light ;

But if I fail not in my deep intent,

Thou'st not another day to live ; which done,

Heav'n take the weak king Edward to his mercy,

And leave the world for me to bustle in.

But soft ;—I'm sharing spoil, before the field is won.

Clarence still breathes, Edward still lives and reigns,

When they are gone, then I must count my gains.

[*Exit, R.H.D.*]

END OF ACT I.

ACT II.

SCENE I.—*Ludgate.*

*Enter TRESSSEL, L.H. meeting LORD STANLEY,
who enters R.H.U.E.*

Tres. My lord, your servant; pray what brought you to St. Paul's?

Stan. I came among the crowd, to see the corpse Of poor king Henry: 'tis a dismal sight. But yesterday I saw him in the Tower; His talk is still so fresh within my memory, That I could weep to think how fate has used him. I wonder where's duke Richard's policy, In suffering him to lie, expos'd to view; Can he believe that men will love him for't?

Tres. O yes, sir, love him as he loves his brothers. When was you with king Edward, pray, my lord? I hear he leaves his food, is melancholy; And his physicians fear him mightily.

Stan. 'Tis thought he'll scarce recover. Shall we to court, and hear more news of him.

(Crosses to L.H.)

Tres. I am obliged to pay attendance here: The lady Anne has license to remove King Henry's corpse to be interred at Chertsey; And I'm engag'd to follow her.

Stan. Mean you king Henry's daughter-in-law?

Tres. The same, sir; widow to the late prince Edward, Whom Gloster killed at Tewksbury.

Stan. Alas! poor lady, she's severely used: And yet, I hear, Richard attempts her love: Methinks the wrongs he's done her might discourage him.

Tres. Neither those wrongs, nor his own shape, can fright him. He sent for leave to visit her this morning,

And she was forc'd to keep her bed to avoid him :
 But see, she is arriv'd ;—will you along
 To see this doleful ceremony ?

Stan. I'll wait upon you. [*Exeunt*, R.H. C.E.

Enter GLOSTER, L.H.

Glos. 'Twas her excuse to avoid me. Alas !
 She keeps no bed ;—
 She has health enough to progress far as Chertsey,
 Though not to bear the sight of me.
 I cannot blame her ;—
 Why, love forswore me in my mother's womb ;
 And, for I should not deal in his soft laws,
 He did corrupt frail nature with a bribe,
 To shrink my sin up like a wither'd shrub,
 To make an ev'ous mountain on my back,
 Where sits deformity to mock my body ;
 To shape my legs of an unequal size,
 To disproportion me in every part.
 And am I then a man to be belov'd ?
 Oh monstrous thought ! more vain than my ambition.

Enter LIEUTENANT, hastily, L.H.

Lieut. My lord, I beg your grace—

Glos. Be gone, fellow ! I'm not at leisure.

Lieut. My lord, the king your brother's taken ill.

Glos. I'll wait on him ; leave me friend.

[*Exit, Lieut.* L.H.]

Ha ! Edward taken ill !

Would he were wasted, marrow, bones, and all,
 That from his loins no more young brats may rise,
 To cross me in the golden time I look for.

*Enter LADY ANNE, in mourning, LORD STANLEY,
 TRESSSEL, Guards and Bearers, with
 King Henry's Body, R.H. U.E.*

But see, my love appears !—Look where she shines,

Darting pale lustre, like the silver moon,
Through her dark veil of rainy sorrow !

So mourn'd the dame of Ephesus her love ;
And thus the soldier, arm'd with resolution,
Told his soft tale, and was a thriving wooer.

'Tis true, my form perhaps may little move her,
But I've a tongue shall wheedle with the devil :
Why, I can smile, and murder while I smile ;
And cry, content, to that which grieves my heart ;
And wet my cheeks with artificial tears,

And frame my face to all occasions.

Yet hold, she mourns the man that I have kill'd.
First let her sorrows take some vent :—stand here ;
I'll take her passion in its wane, and turn
This storm of grief to gentle drops of pity,
For his repentant murderer. (*Retires R.H. U.E.*)

Lady A. (*Advancing to the centre of the stage.*)
Hung be the heavens with black ; yield day to night :
Comets importing change of times and states,
Brandish your fiery tresses in the sky,
And with them scourge the bad revolting stars,
That have consented to king Henry's death.
Oh ! be accurst the hand that shed his blood,
Accurst the head, that had the heart to do it ;
If ever he have wife, let her be made
More miserable by the life of him,
Than I am now by Edward's death and thine.

Glos. Poor girl, what pains she takes to curse herself ! (*Aside.*)

Lady A. If ever he have child, abortive be it,
Prodigious, and untimely brought to light,
Whose hideous form, whose most unnatural aspect,
May fright the hopeful mother at her view,
And that be heir to his unhappiness !*
Now on to Chertsey, with your sacred load.

Glos. (*Advancing L.H.*) Stay, you that bear the
corse, and set it down.

Lady A. What black magician conjures up this
fiend,

* Disposition to mischief.

To stop devoted charitable deeds ?

Glos. Villains, set down the corse ; or, by St. Paul, I'll make a corse of him that disobeys.

Guard. My lord, stand back, and let the coffin pass.

Glos. Unmanner'd slave ! stand thou when I command :

Advance thy halbert higher than my breast,
Or, by St. Paul, I'll strike thee to my foot,
And spurn upon thee, beggar, for thy boldness.

Lady A. Why dost thou haunt him thus, unsated fiend ?

Thou hast but power over his mortal body ;
His soul thou canst not reach, therefore be gone.

Glos. Sweet saint, be not so hard, for charity.

Lady A. If thou delight to view thy heinous deeds,
Behold this patten of thy butcheries.

Why didst thou do this deed ? Could not the laws
Of man, of nature, nor of heav'n dissuade thee ?

No beast so fierce, but knows some touch of pity.

Glos. If want of pity be a crime so hateful,
Whence is it thou, fair excellence, art guilty ?

Lady A. What means the slanderer ?

Glos. Vouchsafe, divine perfection of a woman,
Of these my crimes suppos'd, to give me leave
By circumstance but to acquit myself.

Lady A. Then take that sword, whose bloody point
still reeks

With Henry's life, with my lov'd lord's, young Fr.
ward's,

And here let out thy own, to appease their ghosts.

Glos. By such despair, I should accuse myself.

Lady A. Why, by despairing only canst thou stand
excus'd !

Didst thou not kill this king ?

Glos. I grant ye.

Lady A. Oh he was gentle, loving, mild, and vir-
tuous ;—

But he's in heaven, where thou canst never come.

Glos. Was I not kind to send him thither, then ?
He was much fitter for that place than earth.

Lady A. And thou unfit for any place, but hell.

Glos. Yes, one place else ;——if you will hear me name it.

Lady A. Some dungeon.

Glos. Your bed-chamber.

Lady A. Ill rest betide the chamber where thou liest.

Glos. So it will, madam, till I lie in your's.

Lady A. I hope so.

Glos. I know so. But, gentle lady Anne,—
To leave this keen encounter of our tongues,
And fall to something of more serious method;
Is not the causer of the untimely deaths
Of these Plantagenets, Henry, and Edward,
As blameful as the executioner?

Lady A. Thou wert the cause, and most accurst effect.

Glos. Your beauty was the cause of that effect:
Your beauty, that did haunt me in my sleep
To undertake the death of all the world,
So I might live one hour in that soft bosom!

Lady A. If I thought that, I tell thee, homicide,
These hands should rend that beauty from my cheeks.

Glos. These eyes could not endure that beauty's wreck:

You should not blemish it, if I stood by :
As all the world is nourish'd by the sun,
So ' by that : it is my day, my life !

Lady A. I would it were, to be reveng'd on thee.

Glos. It is a quarrel most unnatural,
To wish revenge on him that loves thee.

Lady A. Say, rather, 'tis my duty,
To seek revenge on him that kill'd my husband.

Glos. Fair creature, he that kill'd thy husband
Did it to help thee to a better husband.

Lady A. His better does not breathe upon the
• earth.

Glos. He lives that loves thee better than he could.

Lady A. Name him.

Glos. Plantagenet.

Lady A. Why that was he.

Glos. The self-same name, but one of softer nature.

Lady A. Where is he?

Glos. Ah, take more pity in thy eyes, and see him
—here!

Lady A. Would they were basilisks to strike thee
dead. (*Crosses to R.H.*)

Glos. I would they were, that I might die at once,
For now they kill me with a living death;
Darting, with cruel aim, despair and love!
I never sued to friend or enemy:
My tongue could never learn soft, soothing words:
But now thy beauty is propos'd my fee,
My proud heart sues, and prompts my tongue to speak.

Lady A. Is there a tongue on earth can speak for
thee:

Why dost thou court my hate?

Glos. Oh teach not thy soft lips such cold contempt.
If thy relentless heart cannot forgive,
Lo! here I lend thee this sharp-pointed sword,
Which, if thou please to hide in this true breast,
And let the honest soul out that adores thee;
I lay it naked to the deadly stroke,

(*She takes the sword.*)

And humbly beg that death upon my knee. (*Kneels.*)

Lady A. What shall I say or do! Direct me, heaven!
(*Aside.*)

Glos. Nay, do not pause, for I did kill king Henry!
(*She offers to strike.*)

But 'twas thy wondrous beauty did provoke me;
Or now despatch—'twas I that stabb'd young Edward:
(*She offers to strike.*)

But 'twas thy heavenly face that set me on!
And I might still persist (so stubborn is
My temper) to rejoice at what I've done:
(*She offers to strike.*)

But that thy powerfull eyes (as roaring seas
Obey the changes of the moon) have turn'd
My heart, and made it flow with penitence.
(*She drops the sword.*)

Take up the sword again or take up me.

Lady A. No, though I wish thy death,
I will not be thy executioner. (*He takes up the sword.*)

Glos. (Rises.) Then bid me kill myself, and I will do it.

Lady A. I have already.

Glos. That was in thy rage;

Say it again, and even with thy word,

This guilty hand, that robb'd thee of thy love,

Shall, for thy love, revenge thee on thy lover ;

To both their deaths shalt thou be accessory.

Tres. By heaven, she wants the heart to bid him do't ! *(Aside to Stan.)*

Stan. What think you now, sir ? *(Aside to Tres.)*

Tres. I'm struck ! I scarce can credit what I see.

(Aside to Stan.)

Stan. Why, you see,—a woman ! *(Aside to Tres.)*

Glos. What, not a word, to pardon or condemn me ?

But thou art wise,—and canst with silence kill me ;

Yet even in death my fleeting soul pursues thee :—

Dash not the tears of penitence away !

Lady A. Would'st thou not blame me to forgive thy crimes ?

Glos. They are not to be forgiven ; no, not even

Penitence can atone 'em !—Oh misery

Of thought,—that strikes me with at once repentance

And despair !—Though unpardon'd, yield me pity !

Lady A. Would I knew thy heart !

Glos. 'Tis figured in my tongue.

Lady A. I fear me, both are false.

Glos. Then never man was true !

Lady A. Put up thy sword.

Glos. Say, then, my peace is made.

Lady A. That shalt thou know hereafter.

Glos. But shall I live in hope ?

Lady A. All men, I hope, live so.

(He sheaths his sword.)

Glos. I swear, bright saint, I am not what I was.

Those eyes have turn'd my stubborn heart to woman ;

Thy goodness makes me soft in penitence,

And my harsh thoughts are turned to peace and love.

Oh ! if thy poor devoted servant might

But beg one favour at thy gracious hand,

Thou would'st confirm his happiness for ever.

Lady A. What is't ?

Glos. That it may please thee leave these sad designs

To him that has most cause to be a mourner,
And presently repair to Crosby house ;
Where,—after I have solemnly interr'd
At Chertsey monast'ry this injur'd king,
And wet his grave with my repentant tears,—
I will with all expedient duty see you.
For divers unknown reasons, I beseech you,
Grant me this favour.

Lady A. I do, my lord,—and much it joys me too,

To see you are become so penitent!—
Tressel, and Stanley, go along with me.

Glos. Bid me farewell.

Lady A. 'Tis more than you deserve :
But, since you teach me how to flatter you,
Imagine I have said farewell, already.

[*Exeunt Lady A. Stan. and Tres. R.H.*]

Guard. Towards Chertsey, my lord ?

Glos. No, to White-friars ; there attend my coming.

[*Exeunt Guards, with the body, L.H.U.E.*]

Was ever woman in this humour woo'd ?
Was ever woman in this humour won ?
I'll have her,—but I will not keep her long.
What ! I, that kill'd her husband, and his father,
To take her in her heart's extremest hate ;
With curses in her mouth, tears in her eyes,
The bleeding witness of my hatred by ;
Having heav'n, her conscience, and these bars against
me,

And I no friends to back my suit withal,
But the plain devil, and dissembling looks !
And yet to win her,—all the world to nothing !
Can she abase her beauteous eyes on me,
Whose all, not equals Edward's moiety ?
On me, that halt, and am mis-shapen thus !
My dukedom to a widow's chastity,
I do mistake my person, all this while :
Upon my life, she finds, although I cannot,

Myself to be a marvellous proper* man.
 I'll have my chambers lined with looking glass;
 And entertain a score or two of tailors,
 To study fashions to adorn my body:
 Since I am crept in favour with myself,
 I will maintain it with some little cost.
 But, first, I'll turn St. Harry to his grave,
 And then return lamenting to my love.—
 Shine out, fair sun, till I salute my glass,
 That I may see my shadow as I pass. [Exit, L.H.]

SCENE II.—*Baynard's Castle.*

Enter BUCKINGHAM, *hastily*, L.H.; meeting LORD
 STANLEY, R.H.

Buck. Did you see the duke?

Stan. What duke, my lord?

Buck. His grace of Gloster, did you see him?

Stan. Not lately, my lord;—I hope no ill news.

Buck. The worst that heart e'er bore, or tongue can
 utter.

Edward the king, his royal brother's, dead!

(Crosses to R.H.)

Stan. 'Tis sad indeed!—I wish by your impatience
 To acquaint him though, you think it so to him:

(Aside.)

Did the king, my lord, make any mention
 Of a protector for his crown and children?

Buck. He did;—Duke Richard has the care of both.

Stan. That sad news you are afraid to tell him too.

(Aside.)

Buck. He'll spare no toils, I'm sure, to fill his
 place.

Stan. Pray heav'n he's not too diligent. (Aside.)

My lord,—is not that the duchess of York,
 The king's mother? coming, I fear, to visit him.

Buck. 'Tis she,—little thinking what has befall'n us.

* Proper in the old language, was handsome.

Enter DUCHESS of YORK, R.H.

Duc. Y. Good day, my lords; how takes the king
his rest?

Buck. Alas! madam, too well!—he sleeps for ever.

Duc. Y. Dead! good heav'n, support me!

Buck. Madam, 'twas my unhappy lot to hear
His last departing groans, and close his eyes.

Duc. Y. Another taken from me, too! why, just
heav'n,

Am I still left the last in life and woe?

First I bemoan'd a noble husband's death,

Yet liv'd with looking on his images:

But now my last support is gone:—first Clarence,

Now Edward, is for ever taken from me:

And I must now of force sink down with sorrow.

Buck. Your youngest son, the noble Richard, lives:
His love, I know, will feel his mother's cares,
And bring new comfort to your latter days.

Duc. Y. 'Twere new indeed! for yet of him I've
none,

Unless a churlish disposition may

Be counted, from a child, a mother's comfort.

Where is the queen, my lord?

Buck. I left her with her kinsmen, deep in sorrow,
Who have with much ado persuaded her
To leave the body.—Madam, she is here.

Enter QUEEN, OXFORD, and BLUNT, L.H.

Queen. (Speaking as she enters.) Why do you thus
oppose my grief? Unless,
To make me rave and weep the faster? Ha!
My mother too in tears! fresh sorrow strikes
My heart at sight of every friend that lov'd
My Edward living;—Oh mother, he's dead!
Edward, my lord, thy son, our king, is dead!
Oh! that my eyes could weep away my soul;
Then I might follow, worthy of his hearse.

Stan. Your duty, madam, of a wife, is dead,
And now the mother's only claims your care.
Think on the prince your son ;—send for him strait,
And let his coronation clear your eyes ;
Bury your griefs in the dead Edward's grave,
Revive your joys on living Edward's throne.

Queen. Alas ! that thought but adds to my afflictions.

New tears for Edward gone, and fears for Edward
• • • living ;
An helpless child in his minority,
Is in the trust of his stern uncle Gloster,
A man that frowns on me, and all of mine.

Buck. Judge not so hardly, madam, of his love.
Your son will find in him a father's care.

Enter GLOSTER, M.D.

Glos. Why, ah ! these tears look well ;—sorrow's the mode,
And every one at court must wear it now :
With all my heart ; I'll not be out of fashion.

(*Aside.*)

Queen. My lord, just heaven knows I never hated
Gloster ;
But would, on any terms embrace his friendship.

Buck. These words would make him weep ;—I know
him your's ;
See where he comes in sorrow for our loss.

Glos. (In Centre.) My lords, good morrow,—Cousin
of Buckingham, (*Weeps*)
I am your's.

Buck. Good morning to your grace.

Glos. Methinks
We meet like men that had forgot to speak.

Buck. We may remember,—but our argument
Is now too mournful to admit much talk.

Glos. It is indeed. Peace be with him that made it
so !
Sister take comfort—'tis true, we've all cause

To mourn the dimming of our shining sta ;
 But sorrow never could revive the dead ;
 And if it could, hope would prevent our tears :
 So, we must weep, because we weep in vain.
 Madam, my mother !—I do cry you, mercy,
 My grief was blind,—I did not see your grace.

(*Crosses to Duchess.*)

Most humbly on my knees, I crave your blessing.

Duc. Y. (R.H.) Thou hast it, and may thy charitable
 Heart and tongue love one another ! may heav'n
 Endow thy breast with meekness and obedience.

(*Duchess, crosses behind to Queen, L.H.*)

Glos. Amen ; and make me die a good old man !
 That's the old butt-end of a mother's blessing :
 I marvel, that her grace did leave it out. (*Aside.*)

Buck. My lords, I think 'twere fit that now Prince
 Edward,

Forthwith from Ludlow should be sent for home,
 In order to his coronation.

Glos. Byall means, my lords ;—Come, let's to council,
 (*Crosses to Centre.*)

And appoint who shall be the messengers :

[*Exeunt Oxford and Blunt, L.H.D.*]

Madam, and you, my sister, please you go
 To give your sentiments on this occasion.

Queen. My lord your wisdom needs no help from
 me ;—

My glad consent you have in all that's just,
 Or for the people's good, though I suffer by't.

Glos. Please you to retire, madam, we shall propose
 What you'll not think the people's wrong, nor your's.

Queen. May heaven prosper all your good intents !
 [*Exeunt all but Glos. and Buck. L.H.D.*]

Glos. Amen, with all my heart, for mine's the
 crown,

And is not that a good one ?—Ha ! pray'd she not well
 cousin ?

Buck. I hope she prophecy'd—you now stand fair.

Glos. Now, by St. Paul, I feel it here ;—methinks
 The massy weight on't galls my laden brow :

What think'st thou, cousin, were't not an easy matter
To get Lord Stanley's hand to help it on?

Buck. My lord, I doubt that; for his father's sake,
He loves the prince too well; he'll scarce be won
To any thing against him.

Glos. Poverty, the reward of honest fools,
O'ertake him for't;—what think'st thou then of
Hastings.

Buck. He shall be try'd, my lord;—I'll find out
Catesby,
Who shall at subtle distance sound his thoughts:
But we must still suppose the worst may happen:—
What if we find him cold in our design?

Glos. Chop off his head:—something we'll soon
determine;
But haste and find out Catesby; (*Buck. Crosses to L.H.*)
That done, follow me to the council-chamber;
We'll not be seen together much, nor have
It known that we confer in private;—therefore
Away, good cousin.

Buck. I am gone, my lord. [*Exit, L.H.*]

Glos. Thus far we run before the wind,
My fortune smiles, and gives me all that I dare ask.
The conquer'd lady Anne is bound in vows!
Fast as the priest can make us, we are one.
The king, my brother, sleeps without his pillow,
And I'm left guardian of his infant heir.

Let me see:—

The prince will soon be here;—let him! the crown!
Oh yes! he shall have twenty; globes and sceptres
too:

New ones made to play withal,—but no coronation;
No, nor any court-flies about him,—no kinsmen.
Hold ye;—where shall he keep his court?—The
Tower?—

By;—the Tower.

[*Exit, R.H.*]

END OF ACT II.

ACT III.

SCENE I.—*Crosby Palace.*

PRINCE EDWARD, GLOSTER, BUCKINGHAM, LORD
STANLEY, TRESSSEL, and *Attendants, discovered.*

Glos. (R.H. of Prince E.) Now, my royal cousin,*
welcome to London :

Welcome to all those honour'd dignities,
Which by your father's will, and by your birth,
You stand the undoubted heir possess'd of :
And, if my plain simplicity of heart
May take the liberty to shew itself ;
You're farther welcome to your uncle's care
And love.—Why do you sigh, my lord ?

The weary way has made you melancholy.

Prince E. (Seated in the centre.) No, uncle ; but
our crosses on the way,
Have made it tedious, wearisome, and heavy :
I want more uncles here to welcome me !

Tres. (L.H.) More uncles ! what means his
highness ? *(Aside to Stanley.)*

Stan. (L.H.) Why, sir, the careful duke of Gloster has
Secur'd his kinsmen on the way ;—Lord Rivers, Grey,
Sir Thomas Vaughan, and others of his friends,
Are prisoners now in Pomfret castle :
On what pretence it boots not ;—there they are,
Let the devil and the duke alone to accuse 'em.

(Aside to Tressel.)

Glos. My lord, the mayor of London comes to greet you.

Enter LORD MAYOR, and Suite, L.H.D.

Lord M. Vouchsafe, most gracious sovereign, to accept

* *Cousin* was the term used in Shakspeare's time, by uncles, to nephews and nieces ; grandfathers, to grandchildren ; &c. It seems to have been used instead of our *kinsman*, and *kinswoman*.

The general homage of your loyal city :
We farther beg your royal leave to speak
In deep condolment of your father's loss ;
And, as far as our true sorrow will permit,
To 'gratulate your accession to the throne.

Prince E. I thank you, good my lord, and thank you
all.

Alas ! my youth is yet unfit to govern,
Therefore the sword of justice is in abler hands :

(*Pointing to Gloster.*)

But be assured of this, (*Rising.*) so much already
I perceive I love you, that though I know not yet
To do you offices of good, yet this I know,
I'll sooner die than basely do you wrong. (*Sits.*)

Glos. So wise so young, they say, do ne'er live long.
(*Aside.*)

Prince E. My lords,
I thought my mother, and my brother York,
Would long ere this have met us on the way :
Say, uncle Gloster, if our brother come,
Where shall we sojourn till our coronation ?

Glos. Where it shall seem best to your royal self.
May I advise you, sir, some day or two
Your highness shall repose you at the Tower ;
Then, where you please, and shall be thought most fit
For your best health and recreation.

Prince E. Why at the Tower ? But be it as you
please.

Buck. (R.H. of Glos.) My lord,—your brother's
grace of York.

Enter DUKE and DUCHESS of YORK, L.H.D.

Prince E. Richard of York ! how fares our dearest
brother ? (*Rising and embracing him.*)

Duke Y. Oh, my dear lord ! So I must call you
now.

Prince E. Ay, brother, to our grief, as it is your's.
Too soon he died who might have better worn
That title, which in me will lose its majesty.

Glos. How fares our cousin, noble lord of York ?

Duke Y. (*Crosses to Glos.*) Thank you kindly, dear uncle :—oh, my lord !

(*Prince E. salutes the Duchess.*)

You said that idle weeds were fast in growth ;

The king, my brother, has outgrown me far.

Glos. He has, my lord.

Duke Y. And therefore, is he idle ?

Glos. Oh, pretty cousin, I must not say so.

Duke Y. Nay, uncle, I don't believe the saying's true,

For, if it were, you'd be an idle weed.

Glos. How so, cousin ?

Duke Y. Because I have heard folks say, you grew so fast,

Your teeth would gnaw a crust at two hours old :

Now, 'twas two years ere I could get a tooth.

Glos. Indeed ! I find the brat is taught this lesson.—

(*Aside.*)

Who told thee this, my pretty merry cousin ?

Duke Y. Why, your nurse, uncle.

Glos. My nurse, child ! she was dead 'fore thou wert born.

Duke Y. If 'twas not she, I can't tell who told me.

(*Crosses to Duchess.*)

Glos. So subtle, too !—'tis pity thou art short-lived.

(*Aside.*)

Prince E. My brother, uncle, will be cross in talk.

Glos. Oh, fear not, my lord ; we shall never quarrel.

Prince E. I hope your grace knows how to bear with him.

Duke Y. You mean to bear me,—not to bear with me.

(*Crosses to Gloster.*)

Uncle, my brother mocks both you and me :

Because that I am little, like an ape,*

He thinks that you should bear me on your shoulders.

(*Crosses to L.H.*)

* At country shows it was common to set the monkey on the back of some other animal, as a bear. The duke, therefore, in calling himself ape, calls his uncle bear.

Prince E. Fye, brother, I have no such meaning.

Glos. My lord, wilt please you pass along ?

Myself, and my good cousin of Buckingham,

Will to your mother, to intreat of her

To meet and bid you welcome at the Tower.

Duke Y. What ! will you to the Tower, my dear lord ?

Prince E. My lord protector will have it so.

Duke Y. I sha'n't sleep in quiet at the Tower.

Glos. I'll warrant you ;—King Henry lay there, And he sleeps in quiet. (*Aside.*)

Prince E. What should you fear, brother ?

Duke Y. My uncle Clarence' ghost, my lord ; My grandmother told me he was kill'd there.

Prince E. I fear no uncles dead.

Glos. Nor any, sir, that live, I hope.

Prince E. I hope so too ; but come, my lords, To the Tower, since it must be so.

(*Exeunt all but Gloster and Buckingham, L.H.*)

Buck. Think you, my lord, this little prating York Was not instructed by his subtle mother, To taunt and scorn you thus opprobriously ?

Glos. No doubt, no doubt ; oh, 'tis a shrewd young master :

Stubborn, bold, quick, forward, and capable !

He's all the mother's, from the top to toe ;

But let them rest ;—now what says Catesby ?

Buck. My lord, 'tis much as I suspected, and He's here himself to inform you.

Enter CATESBY, L.H.

Glos. So, Catesby ;—hast thou been tampering ? What news ?

Cates. My lord, according to th' instruction given me,

With words at distance dropt, I sounded Hastings,

Piercing how far he did affect your purpose ;

To which indeed I found him cold, unwilling :

The sum is this ;—he seem'd awhile to understand me not,

At length, from plainer speaking, urg'd to answer,
He said in heat, rather than wrong the head
To whom the crown was due, he'd lose his own.

Glos. Indeed ! his own then answer for that saying :
He shall be taken care of :—meanwhile, Catesby,
Be thou near me.—(*Catesby retires, R.H.*)—Cousin of
Buckingham,

Let's lose no time ;—the mayor and citizens
Are now at busy meeting in Guildhall.
Thither I'd have you haste immediately,
And at your meetest 'vantage of the time,
Improve those hints I gave you late to speak of :
But above all, infer the bastardy
Of Edward's children.

Nay, for a need, taint thus far Edward's self.—
Say thus :—

When he was born, my sire had wars in France ;
Nor bears he semblance to the duke of York.
Yet touch this sparingly, as 'twere far off,
Because, my lord, you know, my mother lives.

Buck. Doubt not, my lord, I'll play the orator,
As if myself might wear the golden fee
For which I plead.

Glos. If you thrive well, bring 'em to see me here,
Where you shall find me seriously employ'd,
With the most learned fathers of the church.

Buck. I fly, my lord, to serve you. (*Crosses to L.H.*)

Glos. To serve thyself, my cousin ;
For look, when I am king, claim thou of me
The earldom of Hereford, and all those moveables
Whereof the king my brother stood possess'd.

Buck. I shall remember that your grace was
bountiful.

Glos. Cousin, I have said it.

Buck. I am gone, my lord. [*Exit, L.H.*]

Glos. So, I've secur'd my cousin here. These
moveables

Will never let his brains rest, till I'm king. (*Aside.*)
Catesby, go you with speed to doctor Shaw,
And thence to friar Beuker ;—bid 'em both

Attend me here, within an hour at farthest :
 Meanwhile my private orders shall be given

[*Exit Catesby, R.H.*]

To lock out all admittance to the princes.

Now, by St. Paul, the work goes bravely on !

How many frightful stops would conscience make

In some soft heads, to undertake like me ?

Come, this conscience is a convenient scare-crow ;

It guards the fruit which priests and wise men taste,

Who never set it up to fright themselves ;

They know 'tis rags, and gather in the face on't ;

While half-starv'd shallow daws thro' fear are honest.

Why were laws made, but that we're rogues by
 nature ?

Conscience ! 'tis our coin, we live by parting with it ;

And he thrives best that has the most to spare.

The protesting lover huys hope with it ;

And the deluded virgin short-liv'd pleasure ;

Old grey-beards cram their avarice with it ;

Your lank-jaw'd hungry judge will dine upon't,

And hang the guiltless, rather than eat his mutton
 cold :

The crown'd head quits it for despotic sway,

The stubborn people for unaw'd rebellion.

There's not a slave but has his share of villain ;

Why then shall after ages think my deeds

Inhuman ? since my worst are but ambition.

Ev'n all mankind to some lov'd ills incline ;

Great men choose greater sins, ambition's mine.

[*Exit, R.H.*]

• SCENE II.—*Another Room in Crosby Palace.*

LADY ANNE, *discovered sitting on a couch.*

Lady A. When, when shall I have rest ! Was
 marriage made

To be the scourge of our offences here ?

• Oh ! no ;—'twas meant a blessing to the virtuous ;

It once was so to me, though now my curse.
But see,
He comes, the rude disturber of my pillow.

Enter GLOSTER, L.H.D.

Glos. Ha! still in tears! let them flow on: they're
signs
Of a substantial grief:—why dont she die?
She must, my interest will not let her live;
The fair Elizabeth hath caught my eye;
My heart's vacant, and she shall fill her place.
They say that women have but tender hearts:
'Tis a mistake, I doubt!—I've found 'em tough;
They'll bend, indeed,—but he must strain that cracks
'em.

All I can hope's to throw her into sickness,
That I may send her a physician's help. (*Aside.*)
So, madam, what! you still take care, I sec,
'To let the world believe I love you not.
This outward mourning now has malice in't,
So have these sullen disobedient tears;
I'd have you tell the world I doat upon you.

Lady A. I wish I could;—but 'twill not be believ'd.
Have I deserv'd this usage?

Glos. You have;—you do not please me, as at first.

Lady A. What have I done? What horrid crime
committed?

Glos. To me the worst of crimes; outliv'd my
liking.

Lady A. If that be criminal,—just heav'n be kind,
And take me while my penitence is warm;
Oh, sir, forgive and kill me.

Glos. Umph! the meddling world will call that
murder,

And I would have them think me pitiful:
Now, wert thou not afraid of self-destruction,
Thou hast a fair excuse for't.

Lady A. How fain would I be friends with death!

—Oh name it.

Glos. Thy husband's hate : nor do I hate thee only
From the dull'd edge of sated appetite,
But from the eager love I bear another.
Some call me hypocrite,—what think'st thou, now ?
Do I dissemble ?

Lady A. Thy vows of love to me were all dissembled,

Glos. Not one ;—for when I told thee so, I loved :
Thou art the only soul I never yet deceiv'd ;
And 'tis my honesty that tells thee now,
With all my heart I hate thee.

If this have no effect, she is immortal. (*Aside.*)

Lady A. Forgive me, heav'n, that I forgave this
man.

Oh may my story, 'told in after ages,
Give warning to our easy sex's ears ;
May it unveil the hearts of men, and strike
Them deaf to their dissimulated love !

Enter CATESBY, L.H.D.

Glos. Now, Catesby—

Cates. My lord, his grace of Buckingham attends
your highness' pleasure.

Glos. Wait on him ;—I'll expect him here.

[*Exit Catesby, L.H.D.*]

Your absence, madam, will be necessary.

Lady A. Would my death were so ! [*Exit, R.H.*]

Glos. It may be, shortly.

Enter CATESBY and BUCKINGHAM, L.H.D.

Now cousin, what say the citizens ?

[*Exit Catesby, R.H.D.*]

Buck. Now by our hopes, my lord, they are sense-
less stones :
Their hesitating fear has struck 'em dumb.

Glos. Touch'd you the bastardy of Edward's chil-
dren ?

Buck. I did; with his contract to lady Lucy ;*
 Nay, his own bastardy, and tyranny for trifles ;
 Laid open all your victories in Scotland,
 Your discipline in war, wisdom in peace,
 Your bounty, justice, fair humility ;
 Indeed, left nothing that might gild our cause
 Untouch'd, or slightly handled, in my talk :
 And, when my oration drew towards an end,
 I urg'd of them, that lov'd their country's good,
 To do you right, and cry, Long live King Richard.

Glos. And did they so ?

Buck. Not one, by heav'n ;—but each like statues
 fix'd,

Speechless and pale, star'd in his fellow's face :
 Which when I saw, I reprehended them ;
 And ask'd the mayor, what meant this wilful silence :
 His answer was,—the people were not us'd
 To be spoken to, but by the Recorder :
 Who then took on him to repeat my words ;
Thus saith the duke, thus hath the duke inferr'd ;
'But nothing urg'd in warrant from himself.
 When he had done, some followers of my own,
 At th'lower end o'th' hall, hurl'd up their caps,
 And some ten voices cry'd, *God save King Richard !*
 At which I took the 'vantage of those few,
 And cry'd, *Thanks, gentle citizens, and friends,*
This general applause, and cheerful shout,
Argues your wisdom, and your love to Richard ;
 And even here broke off, and came away.

Glos. Oh tongueless blocks ! would they not speak ?

* The king had been familiar with this lady before his marriage ; to obstruct which, his mother alledged a pre-contract between them. "Whereupon, says the historian," dame Elizabeth Lucy was sente for, and albeit she was by the kyng hys mother, and many other, put in good comfort to affirme that she was assured to the kinge, yet when she was solemnly sworne to say ye truth, she confessed she was never ensured. Howbeit, she sayd his grace spake suche loving wordes to her, that she verily hoped that he would have married her; and that yf such kind wordes had not bene; she woulde never have showed such kindnesse to him to lette hym so kyndely gette her wyth chylde.

Hall, Edward v. fo. 19."

Will not the mayor then, and his brethren, come?

Buck. The mayor is here at hand;—feign you some fear:

And be not spoken with, but by mighty suit.
A prayer-book in your hand, my lord, were well,
Standing between two churchmen of repute:
For on that ground I'll make a holy descant;
Yet be not easily won to our requests:
Seem like the virgin, fearful of your wishes.

Glos. My other self!—my counsel's consistory!
My oracle! my prophet! my dear cousin!
I, as a child, will go by thy direction.

Buck. Hark! the lord mayor's at hand:—away, my lord;

No doubt but yet we reach our point propos'd.

Glos. We cannot fail, my lord, while you are pilot!
A little flattery sometimes does well. (*Aside.*)

[*Exit, R.H.D.*]

Enter LORD MAYOR and Suite, L.H.

Buck. Welcome, my lord; I dance attendance here;
I am afraid, the duke will not be spoke withal.

Enter CATESBY, R.H.D.

Now, Catesby! what says your lord to my request?

Cates. My lord, he humbly does intreat your grace
To visit him to-morrow, or the next day:
He's now retir'd with two right reverend fathers,
Divinely bent to meditation;
And in no worldly suit would he be mov'd,
To interrupt his holy exercise.

Buck. Return good Catesby, to the gracious duke;
Tell him myself, the mayor, and citizens,
In deep designs, in matters of great moment,
No less importing than our general good,
Are come to have some conference with his grace.

Cates. My lord, I'll instantly inform his highness.

[*Exit, R.H.D.*]

Buck. Ah, my lord! this prince is not an Edward;

He is not lolling on a lewd love-bed,
 But on his knees at meditation;
 Not dallying with a brace of courtezans,
 But with too deep divines in sacred praying:
 Happy were England, would this virtuous prince
 Take on himself the toil of sov'reignty!

Lord M. Happy indeed, my lord!

He will not sure, refuse our proffer'd love.

Buck. Alas, my lord! you know him not: his mind's
 Above this world!—he's for a crown immortal.

Look there, his door opens; now where's our hope?

Lord M. See where his grace stands, 'tween two
 clergymen! *(Looking off R.H.)*

Buck. Ay, 'tis there he's caught;—there's his
 ambition.

Lord M. How low he bows to thank 'em for their
 care!

And see! a prayer-book in his hand!

Buck. Would he were king, we'd give him leave to
 pray:

Methinks I wish it for the love he bears the city.

How have I heard him vow, he thought it hard

The mayor should lose his title with his office!

Well, who knows? He may be won.

Lord M. Ah, my lord!

Buck. See, he comes forth;—my friends, be resolute;
 I know he's cautious to a fault; but do not
 Leave him, till our honest suit be granted.

Enter GLOSTER, with a book, and CATESBY, R.H.D.

Glos. Cousin of Buckingham,

I do beseech your grace to pardon me,

Who, earnest in my zealous meditation,

So long deferr'd the service of my friends.

Now do I fear I've done some strange offence,

That looks disgracious in the city's eye. If so,

'Tis just you should reprove my ignorance.

Buck. You have, my lord; we wish your grace,
 On our intreaties, would amend your fault.

Glos. Else wherefore breathe I in a christian land?

Buck. Know then, it is your fault that you resign
The scepter'd office of your aucestors,
Fair England's throne, your own due right of birth,
'To the corruption of a blemish'd stock ;
In this just cause, I come, to move your highness,
That on your gracious self you'd take the charge,
And kingly government of this your land ;
Not as protector, steward, substitute,
Or lowly factor for another's gain ;
—But as successively, from blood to blood,
Your own, by right of birth, and lineal glory.

Glos. I cannot tell, if to depart in silence,
Or bitterly to speak in your reproof,
Fits best with my degree, or your condition ;
Therefore,—to speak in just refusal of your suit,
And then in speaking not to check my friends,
Definitively, thus I answer you :
Your love deserves my thanks ; but my desert,
Unmeritable, shuns your fond request ;
For, heav'n be thank'd, there is no need of me :
The royal stock has left us royal fruit,
Which mellow'd by the stealing hours of time,
Will well become the seat of majesty,
And make us, no doubt, happy by his reign.
On him I lay what you would lay on me,
The right and fortune of his happier stars ;
Which, heav'n forbid, my thoughts should rob him of !

Lord M. (Kneels with suite.) Upon our knees, my
lord, we beg your grace
To wear this precious robe of dignity,
Which on a child must sit too loose and heavy ;
—'Tis your's, befitting both your wisdom and your birth.
(*They rise.*)

Cates. My lord, this coldness is unkind,
Nor suits it with such ardent loyalty.

Buck. Oh make 'em happy,—grant their lawful suit.

Glos. Alas, why would you heap this care on me ?
I am unfit for state and majesty.
I thank you for your loves, but must declare,

(I do beseech you take it not amiss,)
I will not, dare not, must not, yield to you.

Buck. If you refuse us, through a soft remorse,
Loth to depose the child your brother's son,
(As well we know your tenderness of heart,)
Yet know, though you deny us to the last,
Your brother's son shall never reign our king,
But we will plant some other on the throne,
To the disgrace and downfall of your house :
And thus resolv'd, I bid you, sir, farewell.

(*Crosses to L.H.*)

My lord and gentlemen, I beg your pardon
For this vain trouble ;—my intent was good ;
I would have serv'd my country and my king ;
But 'twill not be. Farewell, till next we meet.

Lord M. Be not too rash, my lord : his grace re-
lents.

Buck. Away, you but deceive yourselves.

(*Exit, L.H.D.*)

Cates. Sweet prince, accept their suit.

Lord M. If you deny us, all the land will rue it.

Glos. Call him again. [*Catesby crosses and Exit,*
L.H.D.] You will enforce me to

A world of cares : I am not made of stone,
But penetrable to your kind intreaties,—
Though, heaven knows, against my own inclining.

*Re-enter BUCKINGHAM and CATESBY, L.H.D. (Buck-
ingham crosses to Gloster.)*

Cousin of Buckingham,—and sage, grave men,—
Since you will buckle fortune on my back,
To bear her burden, whether I will or no,
I must have patience to endure the load ;
But if black scandal, or foul-fac'd reproach,
Attend the sequel of your imposition,
Your mere enforcement shall acquittance me ;
For heaven knows, as you may partly see,
How far I am from the desire of this.

Lord M. Heaven guard your grace, we see it, and will say it !

Glos. You will but say the truth, my lord.

Buck. My heart's so full, it scarce has vent for words :

My knee will better speak my duty now. (*All kneel.*)
Long live our sovereign, Richard, king of England !

Glos. Indeed, your words have touch'd me nearly, cousin :

Pray rise. (*All rise.*) I wish you could recall 'em.

Buck. It would be treason now, my lord : to-morrow,

If it so please your majesty, from council,
Orders shall be given for your coronation.

Glos. E'en when you please, for you will have it so.

Buck. To-morrow, then, we will attend your majesty ;—

And now we take our leaves with joy. (*Crosses to L.H.*)

Glos. Cousin, adieu ;— my loving friends, farewell :
I must unto my holy work again.

[*Exeunt all but Gloster, L.H.D.*]

Why, now my golden dream is out !

Ambition, like an early friend, throws back

My curtains with an eager hand, o'erjoy'd

To tell me what I dreamt is true. A crown !

Thou bright reward of ever-daring minds,

Oh how thy awful glory wraps my soul !

Nor can the means that got thee dim thy lustre :

For not men's love, fear, pays thee adoration,

And fame not more survives from good than evil deeds:

Th' aspiring youth* that fir'd the Ephesian dome,

Outlives in fame the pious fool that raised it.

Conscience, lie still ; more lives must yet be drain'd ;

Crowns got with blood, must be with blood maintain'd.

[*Exit, R.H.D.*]

END OF ACT III.

* Erostratus ; or, Eratostratus : who set fire to the temple of Diana at Ephesus, that his name by such an uncommon action, might descend to posterity.

ACT IV.

SCENE I.—*A Room in the Tower.*

Enter LADY ANNE, *in tears*, DUKE OF YORK, QUEEN,
PRINCE EDWARD, *and* DUCHESS OF YORK, R.H.

Prince E. Pray, madam, do not leave me yet,
For I have many more complaints to tell you.

Queen. And I unable to redress the least ;
What would'st thou say, my child ?

Prince E. Oh, mother, since I have lain i'the
Tower,

My rest has still been broke with frightful dreams,
Or shocking news has wak'd me into tears :

I'm scarce allow'd a friend to visit me ;

All my old honest servants are turn'd off,

And in their room are strange ill-natur'd fellows,

Who look so bold, as they were all my masters ;

And I'm afraid they'll shortly take you from me.

Duc. Y. Oh mournful hearing !

Lady A. Oh unhappy prince !

Duke Y. Dear brother, why do you weep so ?
You make me cry too.

Queen. Alas, poor innocence !

Prince E. Would I but knew at what my uncle
aims ;

If 'twere my crown, I'd freely give it him,

So he'd but let me joy my life in quiet.

Duke Y. Why, will my uncle kill us, brother ?

Prince E. I hope he won't ; we never injur'd him.

Queen. I cannot bear to see 'em thus. (*Weeping.*)

Enter LORD STANLEY, L.H.D.

Stan. Madam, I hope your majesty will pardon
What I am griev'd to tell ;—unwelcome news.

Queen. Ah me, more sorrow, yet, my lord! We've long

Despair'd of happy tidings; pray what is't?

Stan. On Tuesday last, your noble kinsmen, Rivers, Grey, and sir Thomas Vaughan, at Pomfret, Were executed on a public scaffold.

Duc. Y. Oh dismal tidings!

Prince E. Oh poor uncles! I doubt my turn is next.

Lady A. Nor mine, I fear, far off.

Queen. Why then, let's welcome blood and massacre;

Yield all our throats to the fell tiger's rage,
And die lamenting one another's wrong.

Oh! I foresaw this ruin of our house. *(Weeps:)*

Enter CATESBY, L.H.D.

Cates. Madam, the king
Has sent me to inform your majesty,
That you prepare (as is advis'd from council,)
To-morrow for your royal coronation.

Queen. What do I hear? Support me, heaven!

Lady A. Despightful tidings!—oh, unpleasing news!
Alas, I heard of this before, but could not,
For my soul, find heart to tell you of it.

Cates. The king does farther wish your majesty
Would less employ your visits at the Tower;
He gives me leave t'attend you to the court,
And is impatient, madam, till he sees you.

Lady A. Farewell to all. And thou, poor injur'd queen,
Forgive the unfriendly duty I must pay.

Queen. Alas, kind soul, I envy not thy glory;
Nor think I'm pleas'd thou'rt partner in our sorrow.

Cates. Madam.

Lady A. I come.

Queen. Farewell, thou woeful welcomer of glory.

Cates. Shall I attend your majesty?

Lady A. Attend me! Whither?—To be crown'd?

Let me with deadly venom be anointed,
And die, ere man can say,—“ Long live the Queen !”
[*Exit with Catesby, L.H.*

Stan. Take comfort, madam.

Queen. Alas ! where is it to be found ?
Death and destruction follow us so close,
They shortly must o’ertake us.

Stan. In Bretany,
My son-in-law, the earl of Richmond, still
Resides, who with a jealous eye observes
The lawless actions of aspiring Gloster :
To him would I advise you, madam, fly
Forthwith, for aid, protection, and redress :
He will, I’m sure, with open arms receive you.

Duc. Y. Delay not, madam ;
For ’tis the only hope that heaven has left us.

Queen. Do with me what you please ;—for any
change

Must surely better our condition.

Stan. I farther would advise you, madam, this in-
stant

To remove the princes to some
Remote abode, where you yourself are mistress.

Prince E. Dear madam, take me hence : for I shall
ne’er

Enjoy a moment’s quiet here.

Duc. Y. Nor I ; pray, mother, let me go too.

Queen. Come then, my pretty young ones, let’s
away ;

For here you lie within the falcon’s reach,
Who watches but th’ unguarded hour to seize you.
(*Going with her children, L.H.*)

Enter LIEUTENANT, L.H.

Lieut. I beg your majesty will pardon me ;
But the young princes must, on no account,
Have egress from the Tower :
Nor must (without the king’s especial license,)
Of what degree soever, any person

Have admittance to 'em:—all must retire.

Queen. I am their mother, sir; who else commands 'em?

If I pass freely, they shall follow me.

For you, I'll take the peril of your fault upon myself.

Lieut. My inclination, madam, would oblige you; But I am bound by oath, and must obey:
Nor, madam, can I now with safety answer
For this continued visit.

(Gives the warrant to Stanley.)

Please you my lord, to read these orders.

Queen. Oh, heavenly powers! shall I not stay with them?

Lieut. Such are the king's commands, madam.

Queen. My lord? *(To Stanley.)*

Stan. 'Tis too true,—and it were vain t' oppose 'em.

[Stanley returns the warrant, and Exit, L.H.]

Queen. Support me, heaven!

For life can never bear the pangs of such a parting.

Oh, my poor children! Oh, distracting thought!

I dare not bid 'em, as I should, farewell;

And then to part in silence stabs my soul!

Prince E. What, must you leave us, mother?

Queen. What shall I say? *(Aside.)*

But for a time, my loves:—we shall meet again;

At least in heaven. *(Aside.)*

Duke Y. Won't you take me with you, mother?

I shall be so 'fraid to stay, when you are gone.

Queen. I cannot speak to 'em, and yet we must
Be parted. *(Duchess of York crosses behind to L.H.)*
Then let these kisses say farewell.

Why, oh why, just heaven, must these be our last!

Duc. Y. Give not your grief such way;—be sudden
when you part.

Queen. I will:—since it must be:—to heaven I leave
'em!

(Kneels.—The Lieut. takes charge of the Princes.)

Hear me, ye guardian powers of innocence!

Awake or sleeping, oh protect 'em still!

Still may their helpless youth attract men's pity,

That when the arm of cruelty is raised,
 Their looks may drop the lifted dagger down
 From the stern murderer's relenting hand,
 And throw him on his knees in penitence! (Rises)

Both Princes. Oh mother, mother!

Queen. Oh my poor children!—

[*Exeunt Queen and Duchess of York, L.H. Lieutenant with the Princes, R.H.*]

SCENE II.—*The Presence Chamber.*

Discovering KING RICHARD, seated; BUCKINGHAM, CATESBY, RATCLIFF, &c.

K. Rich. Stand all apart.—[*Exeunt all the Court, but Buckingham, Ratcliff, and Catesby, R.H.*]
 Cousin of Buckingham,—

Buck. My gracious sovereign.

K. Rich. Give me thy hand.

At length by thy advice and thy assistance,
 Is Gloster seated on the English throne.

But say, my cousin.—

What! shall we wear these glories for a day?
 Or shall they last, and we rejoice in them!

Buck. I hope for ages sir;—long may they grace
 you!

K. Rich. Oh, Buckingham! now do I play the touch-
 stone,

To try if thou be current friend indeed:

Young Edward lives;—so does his brother York:—

Now think, what I would speak.

Buck. Say on, my gracious lord.

K. Rich. I tell thee coz, I've lately had two spiders
 Crawling upon my startled hopes;—
 Now, though thy friendly hand has brush'd 'em from
 me,

Yet still they crawl offensive to my eyes;

I would have some kind friend to tread upon 'em:

I would be king, my cousin.

Buck. Why so I think you are, my royal lord.

K. Rich. Ha! am I king? 'Tis so;—but,—Edward lives.

Buck. Most true, my lord.

K. Rich. Cousin, thou wert not wont to be so dull. Shall I be plain;—I wish the bastards dead; And I would have it suddenly perform'd; Now, cousin, canst thou answer me?

Buck. None dare dispute your highness' pleasure.

K. Rich. Indeed! methinks thy kindness freezes, cousin.

Thou dost refuse me, then!—they shall not die.

Buck. My lord, since 'tis an action cannot be Recall'd, allow me but some pause to think; I'll instantly resolve your highness. [*Exit, L.H.*]

Cates. The king seems angry, see, he gnaws his lip.*

K. Rich. I'll henceforth deal with shorter-sighted fools;

None are for me, that look into my deeds

With thinking eyes:—

High-reaching Buckingham grows circumspect;

The best on't is, it may be done without him;

Though not so well perhaps;—had he consented,

Why then the murder had been his, not mine.

We'll make shift as 'tis.—Come hither, Catesby:

Where's that same Tirrel whom thou toldst me of?

Hast thou given him those sums of gold I order'd?

Cates. I have, my liege.

K. Rich. Where is he?

Cates. He waits your highness' pleasure.

K. Rich. Give him this ring, and say myself Will bring him farther orders instantly.

[*Exit Catesby, R.H.D.*]

The deep-revolving duke of Buckingham

Nor more shall be the neighbour to my counsels:

Has he so long held out with me untir'd,

And stops he now for breath?—Well, be it so.—

Several of our ancient historians observe, that this was the accustomed action of Richard, whether he was pensive or angry.

Enter LORD STANLEY, L.H.

How now, lord Stanley;—what's the news?

Stan. I hear, my liege, the lord marquis of Dorset
Is fled to Richmond, now in Bretany.

K. Rich. Why let him go, my lord: he may be
spar'd. (*Crosses to L.H.*)

(*Stanley retires up the stage, L.H.*)

Hark thee, Ratcliff, when saw'st thou Anne, my
queen?

Is she still weak? Has my physician seen her?

Rat. He has, my lord, and fears her mightily.

K. Rich. But he's exceeding skilful, she'll mend
shortly.

Rat. I hope she will, my lord. [*Exit, L.H.D.*]

K. Rich. And if she does, I have mistook my man.

I must be married to my brother's daughter,

At whom I know the Breton*, Richmond, aims;

And by that knot looks proudly on the crown.

But then to stain me with her brother's blood;

Is that the way to woo the sister's love?

No matter what's the way;—

Tear-falling pity dwells not in this eye!

For while they live,

My goodly kingdom's on a weak foundation.

'Tis done, my daring heart's resolved;—they're dead!

(*Aside.*)

Enter BUCKINGHAM, L.H.

Buck. My lord, I have consider'd in my mind,
The late request that you did sound me in.

K. Rich. Well, let that rest.—Dorset is fled to
Richmond.

Buck. I have heard the news, my lord.

K. Rich. Stanley, he's your near kinsman:—well,
look to him.

* He thus denominates Richmond, because after the battle of Tewksbury, he took refuge in the court of Francis II. Duke of Bretagne, where by the intrigues of Edward IV. he was kept a long time in a kind of honourable custody.

Buck. My lord, I claim that gift, my due by promise,
For which your honour and your faith's engag'd;
The earldom of Hereford, and those moveables,
Which you have promis'd I shall possess.

K. Rich. Stanley, look to your wife : (*Stanley advances.*) if she convey
Letters to Richmond, you shall answer it.

[*Exit Stanley, R.H.*]

Buck. What says your highness to my just request ?

K. Rich. I do remember me, Harry the Sixth,
Did prophesy, that Richmond should be king,
When Richmond was a little peevish boy.
'Tis odd !—a king ? Perhaps—

Enter CATESBY, R.H.D.

Cates. My lord, I have obey'd your highness' orders.

Buck. May it please you to resolve me in my suit.

K. Rich. Lead Tirrel to my closet, I'll meet him.

[*Exit Catesby, R.H.D.*]

Buck. I beg your highness' ear, my lord.

K. Rich. I'm busy !—thou troublest me !—I'm not
i' th' vein ! [Exit, R.H.D.]

Buck. Oh, patience, heav'n ! is't thus he pays my
service ?

Was it for this I rais'd him to the throne ?

Oh ! if the peaceful dead have any sense

Of the vile injuries they bore while living ;

Then sure the joyful souls of blood-suck'd Edward,

Henry, Clarenc, Hastings, and all that through

His foul, corrupted dealings have miscarry'd,

Will from the walls of heav'n in smiles look down,

To see this tyrant tumbling from his throne,

His fall unmourn'd, and bloody as their own.

[*Exit, L.H.*]

SCENE III.—*A Chamber in the Tower.*

Enter TIRREL, DIGHTON, and FOREST, L.H.

Tir. Come, gentlemen,

Have you concluded on the means?

Forest. Smothering will make no noise, sir.

Tir. Let it be done i' th' dark ;—for should you see
Their young faces, who knows how far their looks
Of innocence may tempt you into pity?
Stand back.—

Enter LIEUTENANT, R.H.

Lieutenant, have you brought the keys?

Lieut. I have 'em, sir.

Tir. Then here's your warrant to deliver 'em.

(*Giving a ring.*)

Lieut. Your servant, sir. (*Crosses to L.H.*)

What can this mean! why at this dead of night
To give 'em too? 'Tis not for me t'inquire. (*Aside.*)
There, gentlemen;
That way ;—you have no further need of me.

[*Exeunt, Lieut. L.H. the others, R.H.*]

Enter KING RICHARD, through M.D.

K. Rich. Would it were done :

There is a busy something here,
That foolish custom has made terrible
To the intent of evil deeds ; and nature too,
As if she knew me womanish, and weak,
Tugs at my heart-strings with complaining cries,
To talk me from my purpose :—
And then the thought of what men's tongues will
say,—

Of what their hearts must think ;
To have no creature love me living, nor
My memory when dead.

Shall future ages, when these childrens' tale
Is told, drop tears in pity of their hapless fate,
And read with detestation the misdeeds of Gloster,
The crook-back'd tyrant, cruel, barbarous,
And bloody? Will they not say too,
That to possess the crown, nor laws divine
Nor human stopt my way?—Why, let 'em say it :—

They can't but say I had the crown ;
I was not fool as well as villain.
Hark ! the murder's doing : princes, farewell ;
To me there's music in your passing-bell.

Enter TIRREL, R.H.

Now, my Tirrel, how are the brats dispos'd ?
Say, am I happy ? Hast thou dealt upon 'em ?

Tir. If to have done the thing you gave in charge,
Beget your happiness,—then, sir, be happy,
For it is done.

K. Rich. But didst thou see 'em dead ?

Tir. I did my lord.

K. Rich. And buried, my good Tirrel ?

Tir. In that I thought to ask your highness' pleasure.

K. Rich. I have it ;—I'll have 'em sure ;—get me a
coffin

Full of holes, let 'em both be cramm'd into it ;
And hark thee, in the night tide throw 'em down
The Thames ;—once in, they'll find the way to the
bottom ;

Meantime but think how I may do thee good,
And be inheritor of thy desire.

Tir. I humbly thank your highness.

K. Rich. About it strait, good Tirrel.

Tir. Conclude it done, my lord. [*Exit, R.H.*]

K. Rich. Why then, my loudest fears are hush'd ;
The sons of Edward have eternal rest,
And Anne, my wife, has bid this world good night ;
While fair Elizabeth, my beauteous niece,
Like a new morn, lights onward to my wishes.

Enter CATESBY, L.H.

Cates. My lord—

K. Rich. Good news, or bad, that thou com'st in so
bluntly ?

Cates. Bad news, my lord ; Morton is fled to Rich-
mond,

And Buckingham, back'd with the hardy Welshmen,
Is in the field, and still his power increases.

K. Rich. Morton with Richmond touches me more
near

Than Buckingham, and his rash-levied numbers.

But come, dangers retreat when boldly they're con-
fronted, (*Crosses to L.H.*)

And dull delay leads impotence and fear ;

Then fiery expedition raise my arm,

And fatal may it fall on crush'd rebellion !

Let's muster men, my council is my shield ;

We must be brief when traitors brave the field.

[*Exeunt, L.H.*]

SCENE IV.—*The Neighbourhood of St. Paul's.*

Enter QUEEN, and the DUCHESS of YORK, R.H.

Queen. Oh, my poor children !—Oh, my tender
babes !—

My unblown flowers, pluck'd by untimely hands !

If yet your gentle souls fly in the air,

And be not fix'd in doom perpetual,

Hover about me with your airy wings,

And hear your mother's lamentation !

Why slept 'their guardian angels when this deed was
done ?

Duc. Y. So many miseries have drain'd my eyes,
That my woe-wearied tongue is still and mute ;

Why should calamity be full of words ?

Queen. Let's give 'em scope : for though they can't
remove,

Yet do they ease affliction.

Duc. Y. Why, then, let us be loud in exclamations ;
To Richard haste, and pierce him with our cries :

(*Trumpet sounds a march, R.H. U.E.*)

Hark ! his trumpet sounds ;—this way he must pass.

Queen. Alas ! I've not the daring to confront him.

(*Crosses to R.H.*)

Duc. Y. I have a mother's right, I'll force him to hear me.

Enter KING RICHARD and CATESBY, with forces, through the Gates, R.H. U.E. Trumpet sounds a march.

K. Rich. Who interrupts me in my expedition?

Duc. Y. Dost thou not know me? Art thou not my son?

K. Rich. I cry your mercy, madam, is it you?

Duc. Y. Art thou my son?

K. Rich. Ay, I thank heav'n, my father, and yourself.

Duc. Y. Then I command thee, hear me.

K. Rich. Madam, I have a touch* of your condition,

That cannot brook the accent of reproof.

Duc. Y. Stay, I'll be mild and gentle in my words.

K. Rich. And brief, good mother, for I am in haste.

Duc. Y. Why, I have staid for thee, just heaven knows,

In torment and in agony.

K. Rich. And came I not at last to comfort you?

Duc. Y. No, on my soul; too well thou know'st it;—

Agrievous burden was thy birth to me;

Tetchy and wayward was thy infancy;

Thy prime of manhood, daring, bold, and stubborn;

Thy age confirm'd, most subtil, proud, and bloody.

K. Rich. If I am so disgracious in thy eye,

Let me march on, and not offend thee, madam;

Strike up the drum. (*Queen advances, R.H.*)

Duc. Y. Yet stay, I charge thee, hear me.

Queen. If not, hear me;—for I have wrongs will speak

Without a tongue :—methinks the very sight

Of me should turn thee into stone;

Where are my children, Gloster?

* A particle of your temper or disposition.

Duc. Y. Where is thy brother Clarence ?

Queen. Where Hastings ?

Duc. Y. Rivers ?

Queen. Vaughan ?

Duc. Y. Grey ?

K. Rich. A flourish, trumpets, strike alarum, drums,
Let not the heav'ns hear these tell-tale women
Rail on the lords anointed :—strike, I say.

(Alarum of Drums and Trumpets.)

Either be patient, and intreat me fair,
Or with the clamorous report of war
Thus will I drown your exclamations.

Duc. Y. Then hear me heav'n, and heav'n at his
latest hour

Be deaf to him, as he is now to me !

Ere from this war he turn a conqueror,

Ye powers cut off his dangerous thread of life,

Lest his black sins rise higher in account

Than hell has pains to punish ! *(Crosses to R.H.)*

Mischance and sorrow wait thee to the field !

Heart's discontent, languid and lean despair,

With all the hells of guilt pursue thy steps for ever !

[Exit, R.H.]

Queen. Though far more cause, yet much less power
to curse

Abides in me,—*(Advances, R.H.)*—I say amen to her.

K. Rich. Stay, madam, I would beg some words
with you.

Queen. What canst thou ask, that I have now to
grant !

Is't another son ? Gloster, I have none.

K. Rich. You have a beauteous daughter, call'd
Elizabeth.

Queen. Must she die, too ?

K. Rich. For whose fair sake, I'll bring more good
to you,

Than ever you or your's from me had harm ;

So in the Lethe of thy angry soul

Thou'lt drown the sad remembrance of those wrongs

Which thou supposest me the cruel cause of.

Queen. Be brief, lest that the process of thy kindness

Last longer telling than thy kindness' date.

K. Rich. Know then, that from my soul I love the fair

Elizabeth, and will with your permission,
Seat her on the throne of England.

Queen. Alas! vain man, how canst thou woo her?

K. Rich. That would I learn of you,
As one being best acquainted with her humour.

Queen. If thou wilt learn of me, then, woo her thus:—

Send to her, by the man who kill'd her brothers,
A pair of bleeding hearts,—thereon engrav'd,
Edward and York;—then, haply, will she weep.
On this, present her with an handkerchief
Stain'd with their blood, to wipe her woeful eyes:
If this inducement move her not to love,
Read o'er the history of thy noble deeds;
Tell her, thy policy took off her uncles,
Clarence, Rivers, Grey; nay, and, for her sake,
Made quick conveyance with her dear aunt Anne.

K. Rich. You mock me, madam; this is not the way
To win your daughter.

(*King Richard retires; converses with Ratcliff,
and sends him off, l.h.*)

Queen. What shall I say? Still to affront his love,
I fear, will but incense him to revenge;
And to consent, I should abhor myself;
Yet I may seemingly comply, and thus,
By sending Richmond word of his intent,
Shall gain some time to let my child escape him.
It shall be so. (*Aside.—Richard advances.*)
I have consider'd, sir, of your important wishes,
And, could I but believe you real—

K. Rich. Now, by the sacred hosts of saints above—

Queen. O, do not swear, my lord; I ask no oath,
Unless my daughter doubt you more than I.

K. Rich. Oh, my kind mother! (I must call you so)

Be thou to her my love's soft orator ;
 Plead what I will be, not what I have been ;
 Not my deserts, but what I will deserve.
 And, when this warlike arm shall have chastis'd
 The audacious rebel, hot-brain'd Buckingham ;
 Bound with triumphant garlands will I come,
 And lead your daughter to a conquerer's bed.

Queen. My lord, farewell ;—in some few days expect
 To hear how fair a progress I have made :
 Till when, be happy, as you're penitent.

K. Rich. My heart goes with you to my love. Fare-
 well. [*Exit Queen*, R.H.]
 Relenting, shallow-thoughted woman !

Enter RATCLIFF, L.H.

How now ! the news ?

Rat. Most gracious sovereign, on the western coast,
 Rides a most powerful navy, and our fears
 Inform us Richmond is their admiral.
 There do they hull, expecting but the aid
 Of Buckingham, to welcome them ashore. [*Exit*, L.H.]

K. Rich. We must prevent him then.—Come hither,
 Catesby.

Cates. My lord, your pleasure ?

K. Rich. Post to the Duke of Norfolk, instantly,
 Bid him straight levy all the strength and power
 That he can make, and meet me suddenly
 At Salisbury ;—commend me to his grace ;—away.
[*Exit Catesby*, R.H.]

Enter LORD STANLEY, L.H.

Well, my lord, what news have you gather'd ?

Stan. Richmond is on the seas, my lord.

K. Rich. There let him sink,—and be the seas on him
 White-liver'd runagate ;—what does he there ?

Stan. I know not, mighty sovereign, but by guess.

K. Rich. Well, as you guess ?

Stirred up by Dorset, Buckingham, and
 Morton,

He makes for England, here to claim the crown.

K. Rich. Traitor! the crown!

Where is thy power then, to beat him back?

Where be thy tenants and thy followers?

The foe upon our coast, and thou no friends to meet
'em!

Or hast thou march'd them to the western shore,

To give the rebels conduct from their ships?

Stan. My lord, my friends are ready all i' th' north.

K. Rich. The north! why, what do they i' th' north,
When they should serve their sovereign in the west?

Stan. They yet have had no orders, sir, to move:

If 'tis your royal pleasure they should march,

I'll lead them on with utmost haste to join you,

Where, and what time, your majesty shall please.

K. Rich. What, thou'dst be gone to join with Rich-
mond?—Ha—

Stan. Sir, you have no cause to doubt my loyalty;
I ne'er yet was, nor ever will be, false.

K. Rich. Away then to thy friends, and lead 'em on
To meet me;—(*Crosses to R.H.*) hold.—Come back
I'll not trust thee.

I've thought a way to make thee sure;—your son,

George Stanley, sir, I'll have him left behind;

And look your heart be firm,

Or else his head's assurance is but frail.

Stan. As I prove true, my lord, so deal with him.

K. Rich. Away. [*Exit Stanley, R.H.*]

Enter RATCLIFF, L.H.

Rat. My lord, the army of great Buckingham,

By sudden floods, and fall of waters,

Is half lost, and scatter'd:

And he himself wander'd away alone,

No man knows whither.

K. Rich. Has any careful officer proclaim'd
Reward to him that brings the traitor in?

Rat. Such proclamation has been made, my lord.

Enter CATESBY, R.H.

Cates. My liege, the duke of Buckingham is taken.

K. Rich. Off with his head ;—so much for Buckingham.

Cates. My lord, I am sorry I must tell more news.

K. Rich. Out with it.

Cates. The earl of Richmond, with a mighty power,
Is landed, sir, at Milford ;

And, to confirm the news, lord marquis Dorset,
And sir Thomas Lovell, are up in Yorkshire.

K. Rich. Why, ay, this looks rebellion :—Ho ! my horse !

By heav'n, the news alarms my stirring soul ;
Come forth, my honest sword, which here I vow,
By my soul's hope, shall ne'er again be sheath'd ;
Ne'er shall these watching eyes have needful rest,
Till death has clos'd 'em in a glorious grave,
Or fortune given me measure of revenge.

[Exeunt, R.H.]

END OF ACT IV.

ACT V.

SCENE I.—*The Country, near Tamworth.*

Enter RICHMOND, OXFORD, BLUNT, and others,
L.H.U.E.

Rich. Thus far, into the bowels of the land,
Have we march'd on without impediment.
Gloster, the bloody and devouring boar,
Whose ravenous appetite has spoil'd your fields,
Laid this rich country waste, and rudely cropt
Its ripen'd hopes of fair posterity,
Is now even in the center of the isle,

As we're inform'd, near to the town of Leicester:
From Tamworth thither is but one day's march;
And here receive we, from our father Stanley,
Lines of fair comfort and encouragement,
Such as will help and animate our cause;
On which let's cheerly on, courageous friends,
To reap the harvest of a lasting peace,
Or fame more lasting from a well-fought war.

Oxford. Your words have fire, my lord, and warm
our men,
Who look'd, methought, but cold before:—dishearten'd
With the unequal numbers of the foe.

Rich. Why, double 'em still, our cause would conquer 'em.
Thrice is he arm'd, that has his quarrel just;
And he but naked, though lock'd up in steel,
Whose conscience with injustice is corrupted:
The very weight of Gloster's guilt shall crush him.

Bunt. His best friends, no doubt, will soon be
our's.

Oxford. He has no friends, but what are such
through fear.

Rich. And we no foes, but what are such to heav'n.
Then doubt not, heav'n's for us;—let's on, my friends:
True hope ne'er tires, but mounts with eagle's wings;
Kings it makes gods, and meaner creatures kings.

[*Exeunt*, R.H.]

SCENE II.—*Bosworth Field.*

Enter KING RICHARD, NORFOLK, RATCLIFF, &c;
L.H.U.E.

K. Rich. Here pitch our tent, even in Bosworth
Field:
My good lord of Norfolk, the cheerful speed
Of your supply has merited my thanks.

Nor. I am rewarded, sir, in having power
To serve your majesty.

K. Rich. You have our thanks, my lord: up with
my tent;

Here will I lie to-night ;*—but where to-morrow ?
Well, no matter where.—Has any careful friend
Discover'd yet the number of the rebels ?

Nor. My lord, as I from spies am well inform'd,
Six or seven thousand is their utmost power.

K. Rich. Why, our battalia treble that amount ;
Besides, the king's name is a tower of strength,
Which they upon the adverse faction want.

Nor. Their wants are greater yet, my lord ;—those
e'en

Of motion, life, and spirit ;—did you but know
How wretchedly their men disgrace the field ;
Oh, such a tattered host of mounted scare-crows !
So poor, so famish'd ; their executors,
The greedy crows, fly hovering o'er their heads,
Impatient for their lean inheritance.

K. Rich. Now, by St. Paul, we'll send 'em dinners
and apparel ;

Nay, give their fasting horses provender,
'And after fight 'em.—How long must we stay,
My lords, before these desperate fools will give
Us time to lay 'em with their faces upwards ?

Nor. Unless their famine saves our swords that labour,
To-morrow's sun will light 'em to their ruin ;

So soon, I hear, they mean to give us battle.

K. Rich. The sooner still the better.—Come my
lords,

Now let's survey the 'vantage of the ground :

(Crosses to R.H.)

Call me some men of sound direction.

Nor. My gracious lord—

K. Rich. What say'st thou, Norfolk ?

Nor. Might I advise your majesty, you yet
Shall save the blood that may be shed to-morrow.

K. Rich. How so, my lord ?

Nor. The poor condition of the rebels tells me,
'That on a pardon offer'd to the lives

* Richard did not sleep in his tent the night before the battle,
but in the town of Leicester.

Of those that instantly shall quit their arms,
Young Richmond, ere to-morrow's dawn, were friend-
less.

K. Rich. Why that, indeed, was our sixth Harry's
way,
Which made his reign one scene of rude commotion.
I'll be in men's despite a monarch: no,
Let kings that fear, forgive,—blows and revenge for me.
[*Exeunt*, R.H.]

SCENE III.—*Richmond's Camp in Bosworth Field.*

Enter RICHMOND, OXFORD, BLUNT, &c. L.H.

Rich. The weary sun has made a golden set,
And by yon ruddy brightness of the clouds,
Gives token of a goodly day to-morrow.
Sir William Brandon, you shall bear my standard;
My lord of Oxford, you, sir Walter Herbert,
And you, sir William Brandon, stay with me;
The earl of Pembroke keeps* his regiment.
Here have I drawn the model of our battle,
(*Unfolding a Scroll.*)
Which parts in just proportion our small power;
Here may each leader know his several charge.

Enter OFFICER, L.H.

Off. Sir, a gentleman, that calls himself Stanley,
Desires admittance to the earl of Richmond.

Rich. Now, by our hopes, my noble father-in-law;
Admit him:—[*Exit Officer*, L.H.] my good friends,
your leave awhile.

Enter LORD STANLEY, L.H. OFFICERS retire.

My honour'd father! on my soul,
The joy of seeing you this night is more
Than my most knowing hopes presag'd:—what news?

* Remains with i

Stan. I, by commission, bless thee from thy mother,
 Who prays continually for Richmond's good :
 The queen too has with tears of joy consented
 Thou should'st espouse Elizabeth, her daughter,
 At whom the tyrant Richard closely aims.
 In brief, (for now the shortest moment of
 My stay is bought with hazard of my life,)
 Prepare thy battle early in the morning,
 (For so the season of affairs requires,)
 And this be sure of, I, upon the first
 Occasion offer'd, will deceive some eyes,
 And aid thee in this doubtful shock of arms :
 In which I had more forward been, ere this,
 But that the life of thy young brother, George,
 (Whom as my pawn of faith, stern Richard keeps,)
 Would then be forfeit to his wild revenge.
 Farewell, the rude enforcement of the time
 Denies me to renew those vows of love
 Which so long-sunder'd friends should dwell upon.

Rich. We yet may meet again, my lord.—

Stan. Till then, once more farewell,—be resolute,
 and conquer.

Rich. Give him safe conduct to his regiment.

[*Exeunt an Officer, and Stanley, R.H.*]

Well, sirs, (*Officers advance.*) to-morrow proves a
 busy day :

But come, the night's far spent ;—let's in to council ;
 Captain, an hour before the sun gets up,
 Let me be wak'd ;—I will in person walk
 From tent to tent, and early cheer the soldiers.

[*Exeunt, R.H.*]

SCENE IV.—*A Wood.*

*Enter KING RICHARD, RATCLIFF, NORFOLK, and
 CATESBY, L.H.*

K. Rich. Catesby.

Cates. Here, my lord.

K. Rich. Send out a pursuivant at arms
 To Stanley's regiment ; bid him, 'fore sun-rise,

Meet me with his power, or his son George's head
Shall pay the forfeit of his cold delay.

What, is my beaver easier than it was,
And all my armour laid into my tent?

Cates. It is my liege, all in readiness.

K. Rich. What is't o'clock.

Cates. It is nine o'clock, my lord.

K. Rich. Good Norfolk, hie thee to thy charge;
Use careful watch,—choose trusty centinels.

Nor. Doubt not, my lord. (*Crosses to L.H.*)

K. Rich. Be stirring with the lark, good Norfolk.

Nor. I shall, my lord.— [*Exit, L.H.*]

K. Rich. Saddle White Surrey for the field to-morrow.

Is ink and paper ready?

Cates. It is, my lord.

K. Rich. An hour after midnight, come to my tent,
And help to arm me :—a good night, my friends.

[*Exit, R.H.*]

Cates. Methinks, the king has not that pleas'd alacrity,

Nor cheer of mind, that he was wont to have.

Rat. The mere effect of business;
You'll find him, sir, another man i'th' field,
When you shall see him with his beaver up,
Ready to mount his neighing steed, with whom
He smiling seems to have some wanton talk,
Clapping his pamper'd sides to hold him still;
Then, with a motion swift and light as air,
Like fiery Mars, he vaults him to the saddle;
Looks terror to the foe, and courage to his soldiers.

Cates. Good night to Richmond then; for, as I hear,
His numbers are so few, and those so sick,
And famish'd in their march, if he dares fight us,—
He jumps into the sea to cool his fever.

But come, 'tis late;—now let us to our tents,
We've few hours good, before the trumpet wakes us.

[*Exeunt, L.H.*]

SCENE V.—*Richard's Tent.**Enter KING RICHARD, from his Tent.*

K. Rich. 'Tis now the dead of night, and half the world
 Is in a lonely, solemn darkness hung ;
 Yet I (so coy a dame is sleep to me,)
 With all the weary courtship of
 My care-tir'd thoughts, can't win her to my bed ;
 Though e'en the stars do wink, as 'twere with over-
 watching.
 I'll forth and walk awhile ;—the air's refreshing,
 And the ripe harvest of the new-mown hay
 Gives it a sweet and wholesome odour.
 How awful is this gloom ! and hark ! from camp to
 camp
 'The hum of either army stilly sounds ;
 That the fixt centinels almost receive
 'The secret whispers of each other's watch.
 Steed threatens steed in high and boastful neighings,
 Piercing the night's dull ear.—Hark ! from the tents,
 The armourers accomplishing the knights,
 With clink of hammers closing rivets up,
 Give dreadful note of preparation ; while some,
 Like sacrifices, by their fires of watch,
 With patience sit, and inly ruminate
 The morning's danger.—By yon heav'n, my stern
 Impatience chides this tardy-gaited night,
 That like a foul and ugly witch, does limp
 So tediously away,—I'll to my couch,
 And once more try to sleep her into morning.
 (*Advances towards the couch ;—a groan is heard.*)
 Ha ! what means that dismal voice ? Sure 'tis
 The echo of some yawning grave,
 That teems with an untimely ghost.—'Tis gone !
 'Twas but my fancy, or, perhaps, the wind,
 Forcing its entrance through some hollow cavern.—

No matter what;—I feel my eyes grow heavy.
(*Lies down,—Sleeps.*)

KING HENRY'S Ghost appears.

King H. Oh! thou, whose unrelenting thoughts,
not all
The hideous terrors of thy guilt can shake;
Whose conscience, with thy body, ever sleeps,—
Sleep on; while I, by heaven's high ordinance,
In dreams of horror wake thy frightful soul:
Now, give thy thoughts to me; let 'em behold
These gaping wounds, which thy death-dealing hand
Within the tower gave my anointed body;
Now shall thy own devouring conscience gnaw
Thy heart, and terribly revenge my murder.

LADY ANNE'S Ghost appears.

Lady A. Think on the wrongs of wretched Anne,
thy wife,
E'en in the battle's heat remember me,
And edgeless fall thy sword,—despair and die.

The Ghosts of PRINCE EDWARD and the DUKE of YORK, appear.

Prince E. Richard, dream on, and see the wander-
ing spirits
Of thy young nephews, murder'd in the Tower:
Could not our youth, our innocence, persuade
Thy cruel heart to spare our harmless lives?
Who, but for thee, alas! might have enjoy'd
Our many promis'd years of happiness.
No soul, save thine, but pities our misusage:
O, 'twas a cruel deed! therefore alone,
Unpitied, unpitied shalt thou fall.

King H. The morning's dawn has summon'd me
away;
And let that wild despair, which now does prey

Upon thy mangled thoughts, alarm the world.
 Awake, Richard, awake, to guilty minds
 A terrible example ! *(All the Ghosts vanish.)*

K. Rich. (Starts up.) Give me another horse,—bind
 up my wounds ! *(Drops on his Knees.)*

Have mercy, heav'n ! ha ! soft,—'twas but a dream ;
 But then so terrible, it shakes my soul ;
 Cold drops of sweat hang on my trembling flesh ;
 My blood grows chilly, and I freeze with horror :
 Oh, tyrant conscience ! how dost thou afflict me ;—
 When I look back, 'tis terrible retreating ;
 I cannot bear the thought, nor dare repent ;
 I am but man ; and fate do thou dispose me.

Enter CATESBY, R.H.

Who's there ? *(Rises.)*

Cates. 'Tis I, my lord ; the early village cock
 Hath thrice done salutation to the morn :
 Your friends are up, and buckle on their armour.

K. Rich. Oh, Catesby ! I have had such horrid
 dreams.

Cates. Shadows, my lord,—below the soldier's heed-
 ing.

K. Rich. Now, by my this day's hopes,—shadows
 to-night

Have struck more terror to the soul of Richard,
 Than can the substance of ten thousand soldiers,
 Arm'd all in proof, and led by shallow Richmond.

Cates. Be more yourself, my lord : consider, sir,
 Were it but known a dream had frightened you,
 How would your animated foes presume on't !

K. Rich. Perish the thought !—no, never be it said
 That fate itself could awe the soul of Richard.
 Hence, babbling dreams ! you threaten here in vain !
 Conscience, avaunt ! Richard's himself again :

(Trumpets sound a call.)

Hark ! the shrill trumpet sounds to horse ; away ;
 My soul's in arms, and eager for the fray.

[Flourish of Drums and Trumpets, Exeunt, R.H.]

SCENE VI.—*A Wood.**(A March.)**Enter RICHMOND, OXFORD, SOLDIERS, &c. L.H.**Rich.* Halt.*Sold. (Without.)* Halt,—halt!*Rich.* How far into the morning is it, friends?*Oxford.* Near four, my lord.*Rich.* 'Tis well,—

I am glad to find we are such early stirrers.

Oxford. Methinks the foe's less forward than we thought 'em;

Worn as we are, we brave the field before 'em.

Rich. Come, there looks life in such a cheerful haste:

If dreams should animate a soul resolv'd,
 I'm more than pleas'd with those I've had to-night;
 Methought that all the ghosts of them, whose bodies
 Richard murder'd, came mourning to my tent,
 And rous'd me to revenge 'em.

Oxford. A good omen, sir,—(*Trumpet sounds a distant March, R.H.*) hark! the trumpet of
 The enemy; it speaks them on the march.

Rich. Why then let's on, my friends, to face 'em!

In peace, there's nothing so becomes a man,
 As mild behaviour and humility;

But, when the blast of war blows in our ears,

Let us be tigers in our fierce deportment:

For me, the ransom of my bold attempt

Shall be this body on the earth's cold face;

But, if we thrive, the glory of the action

The meanest here shall share his part of;—

Advance your standards, draw your willing swords;

Sound drums, and trumpets, boldly and cheerfully.

The word's St. George, Richmond, and Victory.

[*Flourish of Drums and Trumpets, Exeunt, R.H.*]

SCENE VII.—*Richard's Camp.**Enter* KING RICHARD, CATESBY, and *Forces*, L.H.U.F.*K. Rich.* Who saw the sun to-day?*Cates.* He has not yet broke forth, my lord.*K. Rich.* Then he disdains to shine,—for, by the clock,

He should have brav'd the east an hour ago :

Not shine to-day ! Why what is that to me,

More than to Richmond ! for the self-same heav'n

That frowns on me, looks low'ring upon him.

Enter NORFOLK, with a paper in his hand, R.H.*Nor.* Prepare, my lord, the foe is in the field.*K. Rich.* Come, bustle, bustle, caparison my horse,
Call forth Lord Stanley, bid him bring his power ;
Myself will lead the soldiers to the plain.*[Exit Catesby, L.H.]*

Well, Norfolk, what think'st, thou now ?

Nor. That we shall conquer :—but on my tent,
This morning early, was this paper found.*K. Rich.* (*Reads.*) “ Jockey of Norfolk, be not too bold,

For Dickon,* thy master, is bought and sold.”

A weak invention of the enemy !

Come, gentlemen, now each man to his charge,

And, ere we do bestride our foaming steeds,

Remember whom you are to cope withal,

A scum of Bretons, rascals, runaways,

Whom their o'erclay'd country vomits forth

To desperate adventures, and destruction.—

Enter CATESBY, L.H.

What says Lord Stanley, will he bring his power ?

* *Dickon*, is the ancient vulgar familiarization of *Richard*.

Cates. He does refuse, my lord ;—he will not stir.

K. Rich. Off with his son George's head.

(*Distant March, R.H.*)

Nor. My lord, the foe's already past the marsh ;—*
After the battle let young Stanley die.

K. Rich. Why, after be it then.

A thousand hearts are swelling in my bosom ;
Draw, archers, draw your arrows to the head,
Spur your proud horses hard, and ride in blood ;
And thou, our warlike champion, thrice-renown'd,
St. George, inspire me with the rage of lions ;
Upon 'em :—charge :—follow me ! [*Exeunt, R.H.*]

SCENE VIII.—*A part of Bosworth Field.—*
Alarums.

Enter KING RICHARD, R.H.

K. Rich. What ho ! young Richmond, ho, 'tis
Richard calls !

I hate thee, Harry, for thy blood of Lancaster ;
Now if thou dost not hide thee from my sword,
Now while the angry trumpet sounds alarms,
And dying groans transpierce the wounded air,
Richmond, I say, come forth, and singly face me ;
Richard is hoarse with daring thee to arms.

[*Exit, L.H.*]

SCENE IX.—*A Wood.*

Enter CATESBY, L.H.U.E. ; and NORFOLK, R.H.U.E. in
disorder.

Cates. Rescue ! Rescue ! my lord of Norfolk, haste ;
The king enacts more wonders than a man,
Daring and opposite to every danger :
His horse is slain, and all on foot he fights,

* There was a large marsh in Bosworth plain between the two armies. Henry passed it, and made such a disposition of his forces that it served to protect his right wing. By this movement he gained also another point, that his men should engage with the sun behind them, and in the faces of his enemies ; a matter of great consequence, when bows and arrows were in use.

Seeking for Richmond in the throat of death;
Nay haste, my lord,—the day's against us.

[*Exeunt*, L.H.U.E.]

Enter KING RICHARD and RATCLIFF, L.H.

K. Rich. A horse! a horse! my kingdom for a horse.

Rat. This way, this way, my lord;—below you thicket

Stands a swift horse;—away;—ruin pursues us;
Withdraw, my lord, for only flight can save you.

K. Rich. Slave! I have set my life upon a cast,
And I will stand the hazard of the die! [*Exit Rat.* L.H.]
I think there be six Richmonds in the field,
Five have I slain to-day, instead of him:—
A horse! a horse! my kingdom for a horse. [*Exit*, R.H.]

SCENE X.—*Bosworth Field.*

Enter KING RICHARD, L.H. and RICHMOND, R.H.
meeting.

K. Rich. Of one or both of us, the time is come.

Rich. Kind heav'n, I thank thee, for my cause is thine;

If Richard's fit to live, let Richmond fall.

K. Rich. Thy gallant bearing, Harry, I could
'plaud,

But that the spotted rebel stains the soldier.

Rich. Nor should thy prowess, Richard, want my
praise,

But that thy cruel deeds have stamp'd thee tyrant!

So thrive my sword, as heav'n's high vengeance draws
it.

K. Rich. My soul and body on the action both.

Rich. A dreadful lay;—here's to decide it.

(*Alarums.—They fight; Richard falls.*)

K. Rich. Perdition catch thy arm;—the chance is
thine,

But oh! the vast renown thou hast acquir'd,

In conquering Richard, does afflict him more
Than even his body's parting with its soul.
Now let the world no longer be a stage
To feed contention in a lingering act ;
But let one spirit of the first-born Cain
Reign in all bosoms ; that each heart being set
On bloody actions, the rude scene may end,
And darkness be the burier of the dead ! *(Dies.)*

Rich. Farewell, Richard, and from thy dreadful end
May future kings from tyranny be warn'd ;
Had thy aspiring soul but stirr'd in virtue
With half the spirit it has dar'd in evil,
How might thy fame have grac'd our English annals!
But as thou art, how fair a page thou'st blotted !
(A retreat sounded.)

Hark ! the glad trumpet speaks the field our own.

*Enter LORD STANLEY, OXFORD, and Soldiers, with
KING RICHARD'S, Crown, L.H.*

Oh, welcome, friends ! my noble father, welcome !
Heav'n and our arms be prais'd, the day is our's ;
See there, my lords, stern Richard is no more.

Stan. Victorious Richmond, well hast thou acquitted
thee !

And see the just reward that heav'n has sent thee :
Among the glorious spoils of Bosworth-field,
We've found the crown, which now in right is thine :
'Tis doubly thine by conquest and by choice.
Long live Henry the Seventh, king of England !

(Flourish ;—all Kneel.)

Rich. Next to just heav'n, my countrymen,
I owe my thanks to you, whose love I'm proud of,
And ruling well shall speak my gratitude.
But now, my lords, what friends of our's are missing !
Pray tell me, is young George Stanley living ?

Stan. He is, my liege, and safe in Leicester town,
Whither if you please, we may withdraw us.

Enter BLUNT, R.H.

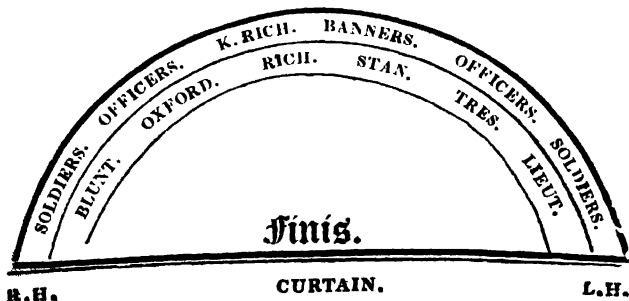
Blunt. My lord, the queen, and fair Elizabeth,

Her beauteous daughter, some few miles off,
Are on their way to 'gratulate your victory.

Rich. Ay, there, indeed, my toil's rewarded.
Let us prepare to meet 'em, lords ;—and then,
As we're already bound by solemn vows,
We'll twine the roses red and white together,
(*They wave the Banners.*)

And both from one kind stalk shall flourish !
England has long been mad, and scarr'd herself ;
The brother blindly shed the brother's blood ;
The father rashly slaughtered his own son ;
The bloody son, compelled, has kill'd his sire.
Oh, now, let Henry and Elizabeth,
The true successors of each royal house,
Conjoin'd together, heal those deadly wounds !
And be that wretch of all mankind abhorred,
That would renew those bloody days again ;
Ne'er let him live to taste our joy's increase,
That would with treason wound fair England's peace !

Disposition of the Characters when the Curtain falls.





Ageman, del T Woolnoth, scult.

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Remarks.

HAMLET.

It is quite refreshing in our critical journey to meet with a play of Shakspeare's; it is manna in the wilderness; it is a green spot in the barren desert, where the flowers are sweet, and the springs are flowing, and nature seems to live again; if, weary with past toil and delighted with present freshness, we linger in the way, the fault, we think, may be easily forgiven.

Here then, we shall take the opportunity of expounding our poetical creed; not indeed in its full extent, but as far as our very brief limits will allow; the time now spent in this detail will be more than regained in our future essays collectively, each of which will be proportionably brief, as nothing more will then be necessary than opinions absolutely and generally expressed; the reader will judge of their correctness by reference to the present exposition. We are the more induced to this as we do not precisely agree with the acute and eloquent Hazlitt in his poetical doctrines: besides, much as we admire his genius, he does not deal sufficiently in general principles; he writes beautiful eulogiums on plays or passages individually, but can hardly be said to have given us a system, or measure, applicable to any poem of any poet; we do not, however, pretend to offer a complete system; our limits, which are necessarily brief, will only admit of a few remarks given without much circumstance, but these will be of universal application, not confined to any particular play or poet.

There is something more in poetry than dull people,* or such as

* Though not often in accord with Dr. Johnson, yet we perfectly agree with him in his detestation of these "*cul bono*" blockheads; with them is good that does not administer to their immediate gratification; they look to the body only, and as long as that is well fed, well lodged, and well clothed, they seek no further; the

are of mechanic habits, are willing to allow; the love of it is general, and all general feelings are founded in nature: it is, in fact, the only point in which all nations agree; the civilized and the rude, the inhabitants of the hottest, or of the coldest climate in this respect are the same—Nor is this generality of agreement confined to any peculiar time; tradition informs us, that the barbarians of past ages told their love as well as the achievements of their warriors in verse, and experience gives precisely the same account of the barbarians of our days, of the Laplander, and the American, the Hottentot, and the Hindoo. This universal consent, without even a solitary exception, must have its root in our very nature: it must be as much a part of our original constitution, as the blood which circulates in our veins; for, it is manifest that it does not depend upon outward circumstances, which, as they are variable in themselves, must, wherever they are concerned, produce a corresponding variety of result. All this will be very imperfectly explained by supposing the use of poetry to have arisen from the facilities which it offered to memory at a time when the art of writing was unknown: such a cause would be very unequal to the effect: besides, we should still be left to seek a reason for its very powerful influence over the civilized world, and thus we shall have two different causes producing the same result; let it not however be supposed that we deny the possibility of such a proposition; we only mean to advocate the simplicity of truth: when one cause is sufficient to one effect, why

mind they leave to take care of itself; that is a matter altogether beyond the sphere of their inquiry; almost all the old artists of the present day are men of this description; they hate youth with a perfect and heartfelt rancour, because they have been taught to know something better than themselves; poetry is above all the object of their abhorrence; they detest it with a most ferocious and orthodox spirit; yet the *cui bono* might with just as much reason be applied to painting, sculpture, and architecture, as to poetry; architecture more particularly adds very little to the stock of enjoyment; it is at best a poor, cold art, and has little connexion with the fancy—or course we speak in comparison with its rivals; the power of poetry to exalt, refine, ameliorate, and delight, is unequalled; nothing is so potent in expanding the mind to goodness, and enlarging its capability of enjoyment.

seek for two? And here, moreover, the apparent difficulty is easy to be solved.

We believe then the love of poetry amongst a savage people arises from the gratification its *music* affords the ear, and *music is at least the one-half of that which constitutes poetry*; it is music, which above all distinguishes it from prose; its metaphors, its personifications, similies, and array of figures, may, and indeed are, used in oratory, and this gives us a strong marked line of distinction, which would puzzle the most cavilling critic to pass over. The reader perhaps will be startled at our expression; yet it is no less just; * music is not necessarily connected with singing in its common acceptation, nor with any instrument; they are but modes of producing it, not the thing itself; music is nothing more than sounds so modulated as to produce harmony without any kind of reference to the manner of its production, and as such its presence in poetry is sufficiently intelligible: in fact poetry has both time and tune, the foundation and very essence, as it were, of music. That this love for music should be so general is by no means extraordinary; were it not so, hearing would be the only one of our senses left without any means of gratification; we have no more reason to be surprised at the ear delighting in sweet sounds than at the taste being pleased with sweet substances.

Besides there is a wonderful power in abstract sounds, that is, sounds considered by themselves without any *association of ideas*, to which latter alone the effect of music is generally but falsely attributed; not that we mean to deny to the association of ideas all influence; we only say it does not effect every thing; there is most unquestionably a mysterious connexion between sounds and the human mind through the organ of hearing; whether it is that the nerves are affected, and

* All nations seem originally to have felt this, for *song* and *poetry* have with most people been used as synonymous terms, and the same mode of expression has descended to modern times; the Greek *αᾶσις*, the Latin *canere*, the Italian *cantare*, the German *singen*, the English *sing*, the French *chanter*, are invariably with their synonymes and corresponding nouns applied to poetry. To give examples of a subject so familiar would only be to incumber our pages: it is sufficient to have pointed out the fact; the reader's memory will furnish him with many more illustrations than are requisite.

if so, in what manner, is more than we can take upon us to decide; the question we suspect is purely physical. Such, however, being the influence of abstract harmony, it is clear that language must gain increased power, and would be more pleasing by an union with it; the tale of the lover would become more impassioned, and the war-cry of the hero more inspiring; and, though the savage would not argue thus, he would feel thus; this instinctive love of harmony would soon teach him to modulate language, and the very first trial would lead to repetition by its success.

We have said that music is an *essential part* of poetry, but it is far from being all; something more is wanting to its just definition, a definition which it should seem is difficult to be given, for though many have tried to explain the term, none, as far as we remember have succeeded; even the ingenious Hazlitt has failed in the effort, and he appears to have been conscious of the failure, for instead of one, he gives twenty definitions; this looks much like doubting the truth of the first offered; were that perfect, the rest would be superfluous.— But to our own ideas on this subject, which we offer in the hope, not in the certainty, of their correctness.

Poetry is the expression, in language modulated to music, of all that is subjected to the senses, acted upon by the imagination; we say, "acted upon by the imagination," for it does not pretend to describe any object or passion with the accuracy of demonstration, but as such object is presented to the fancy; and, as we shall see hereafter, a better idea of any thing is thus conveyed than by more precise details.

It may perhaps be objected to this definition, that it does not go far enough; that poetry sometimes describes things that do not exist in nature, and therefore are not the subject of the senses; to this we reply at once, impossible; no poet can create, if he would; he may exaggerate or diminish reality; or combine matter, colour, or passions, which according to nature never are met in combination; still the component parts of this description must be borrowed from the visible world, which originates and limits all our ideas; thus the whole or an aggregate of images may be false, but each individually must exist in nature, though perhaps lessened or increased above or below its real standard.

It may now be said that poetry is founded in falsehood; to this we demur; the impression may be no more than truth, when that

• which produces it is false, for there is a vast disproportion between
 • language and the impression it gives rise to. This will be made plain
 • by reference to a sister art; suppose a sculptor wished to form a figure
 • that should appear as large as life, when at the distance of a hundred
 • feet or more from the ground; it is quite clear that the parts, which
 • make up this object, must be all equally enlarged, to bring about the
 • desired effect, and thus, though the figure itself is exaggerated, the
 • *impression* arising from it is no more than truth. It is the same, or
 • nearly the same with poetry; the sluggishness of fancy, and slowness
 • to incitement in the one case are equivalent to distance in the other:
 • —if the poet would bring home to the reader's imagination the idea of
 • exceeding height, he must exaggerate the different images requisite to
 • that notion; thus for instance, Shakspeare in his description of Dover
 • Cliff says:—

The crows and choughs, that wing the midway air,
 Shew scarce so gross as beetles: half way down
 Hangs one that gathers samphire; dreadful trade!
 Methinks, he seems no bigger than his head.
 The fishermen that walk upon the beach,
 Appear like mice: and yon tall anchoring bark,
 Diminish'd to her cock; her cock a buoy
 Almost too small for sight. The murmuring surge,
 That on the unnumber'd idle pebbles chafes,
 Cannot be heard so high.—

KING LEAR, A. 4, S. 6.

Now, not one word of this description is true; the crows and choughs do not look so small as beetles; the man gathering samphire half way down the rock does not seem “no bigger than his head;” the bark does not appear diminished to her cock; and the roaring of the surge would be distinctly heard, if the rock were as high again as it really is; here then is a description, the separate images of which are all locally untrue; still the effect on the reader's fancy, resulting from the whole combined, is little, if at all beyond reality; he conceives at once the enormous height of the cliff, much better than he would from any arithmetical statement of its feet and inches; we cannot carry measure to our eye, and even if we could, a dry detail would have no effect upon the fancy; the terrors of the height would not be present to the mind from such a statement, because the cliff itself would not be visible to the imagination.

Another draw-back to what is usually supposed to be exaggeration is the superior power of the poet's fancy, when compared with that of his readers ; the one will find beauty in a barren heath or a stormy sky, while the other sees nothing in them, or nothing but deformity ; the poet wishes to communicate the picture which is present to his own fancy ; his mind is filled with images that would not occur to another traversing the same ground, and these he delineates with the same glow that he himself feels ; here then will be two sources of apparent exaggeration ; first, his *impression* or sensation of the objects seen is more acute ; secondly, he must equalize the disproportion between language and its effects by exaggerating the former ; but a dull matter-of-fact critic comparing such a description with his own recollection, will be disposed to think all this false, because these are objects which he did not see, and feelings which he did not feel ; the barren waste brought no other idea to his mind, but that of dreariness ; he saw neither beauty nor sublimity ; his impressions therefore are different, and to this is superadded the necessary and natural aggravation in the language.—All this of course applies more immediately to description, and that too of it animate nature ; but then it extends to exaggeration of one kind as well as another—to that of deformity as well as beauty ; all depends upon the texture of the poet's mind ; the gloomy Byron would find a desert in a flower garden, and the voluptuous Moore would as certainly find a flower garden in a desert.

In regard to the human passions as detailed by the poet, other considerations will arise. Society now is a different thing from what it used to be ; it is a machine, the several parts of which must move in a proscribed course, each being subordinate to, and actuated by the whole ; there is no room for the growth of peculiar disposition ; we are melted down, as it were, into one mass ; each one ~~is~~ ^{was} in a great measure lost his individuality ; each is a part of a whole, not a whole of himself ; each acts, and even, in a great measure, thinks with those around him ; instead of righting wrong or avenging insult with the sword, we fight our quiet battles in the halls of justice ; quills are our weapons, lawyers are our soldiers ; instead of our blood, we spend our fortune in our quarrels ; the same passions exist, but they do not find the same outlets, and moreover, they are considerably modified by education, effeminacy, and the blunted state of feeling ; we have infinite polish, but little energy ; we do less evil, but then we do less good ; we may

have as much courage, but we certainly are not so much in love with danger; if we do not run from it, we do not willingly go to meet it; we are not so fast friends, so kind masters, so faithful servants, so true lovers, nor so attached kinsmen—the *romance of life* is over—the *poetry of feeling* is no more. The present is essentially a prosaic age—we have reversed the whole system of our forefathers; their existence from beginning to end was purely romantic; there was excess in all their doings, good or bad; there was no effeminacy, no half-measures, either in their vice or in their virtue; all with them was on a scale of colossal greatness; the passions of every class shot forth luxuriantly without controul; society was like the soil of the new world, where the earth is rich to rankness, and from the overflowing abundance of its fertility, brings forth the most noxious weeds and the most envenomed insects. They were all energy and courage, because energy and courage were requisite to existence; they slept as it were with the sword in their grasp; all the habits, and necessities of their life tended to brace their minds and bodies, and in both respects they were giants. Here then were to be found examples of all that could most dignify or most debase our nature.

To this turbulent period succeeded a time, of all others the most favourable to poetry, a time in which order prevailed, and the ground was cultivated, but the richness of the soil was not yet drained; men thought and acted as vigorously, but not as wildly as before:—the poet had excellent materials to work upon in the life that surrounded him, and even if that were not enough for his genius, he might borrow from the time which was still fresh to the fancy of men; his coteremporaries were minds of the same bold stamp, though bitted and curbed by social discipline, and would acknowledge the reality of his pictures*. It is not fair therefore to condemn such writers, because we have not the same originals before us; equally unjust is it to censure modern poets, who are forced to borrow their description of the passions from their

* We do not by all this mean to decide that the rudeness of ancient society is preferable to modern refinement; that point is not at all in question; we only wish to shew that the passions have not been exaggerated by tragedy, but tamed down by modern habits—perhaps for the better.

predecessors, because the tameness of modern life is utterly inadequate to the purposes of tragic action; hence also it is that we find the descriptive poets are infinitely superior to those who exhibit human nature, for man has acquired from different habits a different and less interesting seeming, but inanimate objects, the earth, the sky, the heavens, remain unaltered. It is indeed true that the desert may have become fertile, and fertility may have become desert; earth and ocean may have changed their places; still the materials are the same, there is the same grandeur, the same beauty; the change is local, not general.

In regard to Epic, Lyric, and the minor kinds of poetry, all civilized nations are agreed, and simply from this—they all have taken the Greek for their model;—in regard to the stage the matter is reversed; the Italian and French have been contented to imitate, and very indifferently, the Grecian masterpieces, while the English have formed a school for themselves upon very different principles, which has been successfully followed by the Germans. „Nothing can be more absurd than to try an English Dramatist by the laws of Grecian Tragedy; it is mangling a giant in the bed of Procrustes; the two are essentially distinct in the principles of their construction. If we look for a moment at their respective origins, we cannot fail to perceive this truth. The Greek Tragedy grew out of a single ode, of which it has all the characteristics; its simplicity of form, its loftiness of language, and its abundance of description; the foundation was narrow, and the building could not extend beyond the foundation; to speak plainly, the Greek Drama, though beautiful in its language, by turns tender, sublime, pathetic, is yet as a whole a very rude construction;—witness the prologue which opens the play, and narrates so much of antecedent events, and of the persons concerned, as is requisite to the right and full understanding of the subsequent matter. Again the nuntius, or messenger, who comes and relates the catastrophe which of course loses half its effect by the tameness of the recital; narration always throws objects at a vast distance, thus lessening their greatness, and making them indistinctly visible.—Still worse in the chorus; it occupies the stage in defiance of all probability, and seems rather a spectator than an actor in the scene—but of this presently.

The English Drama grew out of rude representations, called Moralities and Mysteries; these sometimes borrowed their fables from

the Old and New Testaments, and sometimes personified the abstract passions and qualities of mind, combining them in a simple story. And here we should observe, by the way, that this personification seems borrowed from the mythology of Greece and Rome, where Strength, Fortitude, Love, &c. were worshipped as deities. By degrees profane histories were introduced, but still upon the same plan as the Moralities and Mysteries; the object was not, as with the Greeks, the imitation of a tragic action, but a history, whether true or false, scriptural or profane, abounding in interesting incidents; it was not a single action, but a multitude of actions. Comedy would naturally be intermixed from its obvious utility in affording a relief to tragic darkness, and still more as existing in that real world from which their stories emanated in the first instance. To observe the unities of time, place, and action, would be utterly impossible to such a school; a large portion of history, whether general or peculiar, could not be told without supposing many actions, many actions could as little happen in the same place, and the variety in these, of course, called for a large allowance of time. Thus, the origin and consequent tendencies of the English drama were totally opposed to that of Athens. The latter was essentially heroic; its fables were heroic, and the manner of handling them no less so; any history that was real, or exhibited natural events and passions, was adopted without selection by the English drama; the one told a tale, partly in dialogue and partly by narration, but chiefly by the latter; the dialogue only seemed to link the different parts of the recital together; the other, on the contrary, puts the whole into action; the story is not told but acted before our eyes. It only remains to consider which system deserves the preference.

It must be allowed that the Greek tragedy shuts out variety by the rigid observation of the unities, and the utter exclusion of comedy*.

* In saying, the "utter exclusion of comedy," we have gone, perhaps, too far; there are a few, a very few instances of comedy being intermixed with tragedy, but always most sparingly and of an undecided character; indeed they would hardly have been worth mentioning, but to stop the mouth of cavil, which would otherwise have cried out at our inaccuracy. To the learned reader these examples must be sufficiently familiar; the unlearned may be fully informed by referring to

This same monotony is extended to the language, which is never marked by any visible differences according to the quality and feeling of the characters ; it is always elevated and weighty, the only distinction being, the chorusses are of a purely lyric nature with all its perplexity of metaphor and involutions of speech, while the iambic portion has all the tone and manner of epic poesy. The structure is extremely rude ; nothing evinces this more strongly than the awkward contrivance of the prologue to tell what the story ought to tell for itself ; all reality is destroyed by this immediate address to the spectators. In the middle of the play the presence of the chorus is no less to be deprecated ; their cold moralizing on the story is an utter enemy to all illusion ; they are detached fragments, by no means necessary adjuncts to the fable ; they can in no way be said to forward the plot, but are to be considered as so many comments on a given text. The messenger is, if possible, a still more clumsy invention ; like the chorus, he hardly seems a portion of the play ; besides, there is too much of narration and too little of action ; a Greek tragedy seems to be no more than the recital of some act ; an English tragedy seems to be the act itself ; in the one case we are, as it were, bye-standers and witnesses of the events, and love, and events of all sorts, without actually mingling in what which passes before us ; in the other, we are only called upon to listen to the telling of such things ; in the one case the act is brought close to us ; in the other it is softened and thrown at a distance by the dense medium of narration. The comparison, thus far, is certainly in favour of our poets.

It may, perhaps, be said, that though the chorus, prologue, and nuntius, are rude contrivances, still there is *simplicity* in the fable of the Grecian drama. This unfortunate word *simplicity*, like *nature*, is the constant theme of the critics, to whom it is a perfect Will-o'-the-wisp, leading them into all manner of ~~marshes~~ and quagmires ; these magic phrases have over them the same power that Odin's horn had over the enemies of Sir Huon, and no sooner do they catch the sound than a perfect phrenzy seizes them, and they play as many wild antics with language, as the monks and nuns did with their feet ; it has been

Twining's translation of Aristotle, in the notes to which he has amply discussed the subject.—We therefore spare quotations, for this article is already too extended, and we have still much matter on our hands.

a sad stumbling block, and yet, we apprehend, the subject is so easy that it hardly merits a dozen words in the way of explanation. Simplicity of story can only be a merit inasmuch as it may be more perfectly comprehended, or as it may be more effective, or lastly, as it may, by its superior difficulty of execution, require greater talent to its accomplishments. Now it has not one of these advantages, not even the last-mentioned, which yet would be a very equivocal recommendation. In regard to the first point, we know, by experience, that a complex fable may be perfectly understood; the mind has no more difficulty in combining or unravelling the different parts, than the eye has in taking in the varieties of an extended prospect; this is proved by the fables of Shakspeare's plays, which, certainly, are complex, that is, they are made up of different actions; it is, no doubt, possible so to perplex a plot as to render it unintelligible to the casual glance of the spectator; but this is supposing an extreme case, which has nothing to do with our question.

As to simplicity of fable being more effective, this, if at all, must be, we should think, by directing the attention to one object, which thus has a more vivid impression; but this, like the former, supposes an extreme case; a play occupies sufficient time for the mind to embrace many objects, though certainly there is a limit to this power; but we are inclined to go further; an action, considered by itself is not so distinct as when by the side of others, for thus comparison arises, which throws it more forward; variety, too, is the soul of beauty.

As to simplicity being more easy of execution, that, as far as story is concerned, is palpably absurd; surely two incidents must be more difficult of invention and management than one.

In point of character, the English drama is most incontestibly the superior. In the Athenian tragedy, the mind always wears, if we may be allowed a bold expression, the same costume; indeed the individual character of the Greek appears to have been lost in the general one of his nation; at least such are the portraits painted by their dramatists; now the English, on the contrary, have less of national character than any people in existence; each individual is too strongly marked by

Though we use the present tense, of course we speak more particularly in reference to the ages gone by; yet, even now, the Englishman is more marked as an individual than his neighbours; it used to

his own peculiarities to wear a general uniform. Hence it is, perhaps, that our drama has acquired this advantage, which it possesses to so great an extent, that one play of Shakspeare has more portraits of character, than are to be found in all the Greek tragedies collectively, that time has left to us.

In sublimity, pathos, imagery, and all that regards language, the points of advantage are more equal; yet here they hardly come to a level in the comparison; their pathos, especially, is too stately: there is no relaxation; it is all in the same key. Here too, where simplicity would be well employed, we do not find it; the diction of Greek tragedy is any thing but simple; it is perfectly Eastern, exalting common ideas by every artifice of language; Shakspeare, on the other hand, had the art of being poetical without these complexities of expression: he is, indeed, occasionally perplexed, but this arises from the compressed energy of his language, and not from such unmeaning hyperboles.

The observance of the Unities, the great theme of praise to the Greeks, seems to us one of the principal causes of their inferiority. One action is hardly of sufficient weight to interest long together; it loses much too, as we before observed, from standing alone, from having nothing near to relieve or heighten its effect; it makes the character, too monotonous; for character, like glass with many surfaces, must be exposed in many ways to the light, if we wish to be acquainted with the varieties of its brilliance.

And what is lost by the neglect of the two unities of time and action? Some critics would reply, *reality*; for, according to them, ten days with their corresponding events cannot occur by any power of fancy in three hours. Now, setting aside that the Greek tragedy has not the remotest pretensions to reality, and therefore could gain nothing on that score by such observance, this is at least a curious argument, but no less curious is the answer of Doctor Johnson, who poorly pilfered the poor reasoning from Farquhar, and, notwithstanding all his pretended love for truth, forgot to acknowledge the obligation—"It is false," he says, "that any representation is mistaken for reality; that

show itself in passions, and now it peeps out in humours. We need not molest the text, not being rightly understood, should appear to militate against what we before advanced.

any dramatic table in its materiality was ever credible, or for a single moment was ever credited."—To use the words of Shakspeare's Escalus, "which is the wiser? justice or iniquity?"—In good sooth, the Doctor was a marvellous animal where poetry was in question, and some of his discoveries were truly wonderful; amongst many other points of equal wisdom he found out that blank verse was no more than prose, and that Gray was not a poet, which admirable results he has couched in language equally admirable; but we may very safely leave the Doctor and his *materialities*; there is no truth to be got from that quarter.

The secret of the unities of time and action lies in a very narrow compass.—As long as the mind is occupied by any fiction, that fiction is to it a reality; it does not consider, but voluntarily believes; that particular faculty of the mind, which may be called reason, lies dormant; its operation is purposely suspended, and imagination is nearly if not entirely the only active power; whatever is so weak that it fails to keep it in this state of excitation, or so exaggerated that it violently arrests its operation, equally tends to awaken the reasoning faculty, and the consequence is, the illusion is destroyed; the fiction, which was truth to the imagination, is a falsehood to the reason. Here, at once, we get a clue to the whole mystery; so long as the action flows on in one uninterrupted progress, the fancy is satisfied; let there be any striking chasm, any complete breaking off in the story, and the imagination is also stopt in its career. For instance, in "The Winter's Tale," there are several distinct actions occupying days before the supposed death of Hermione, to all of which the imagination accedes; but when the poet destroys the link and wishes us to suppose that years are past, which years are marked by no visible action, then, indeed, we can endure no longer; the thoughts in our minds go on link by link, and that which is called upon to believe must go on in the same progression; it is not then, *Unity, but interrupted continuation of action*, that is requisite to reality.

The unity of place is thus naturally destroyed, for it is impossible to conduct a multitude of opposite events on one spot of ground; and even here the same rule seems to hold; we bear the being transported from one house to another, nay from distant parts of the same country, yet the wildest imagination would not endure a change of scene from London to the Indies.—Why is this? Simply, because here again

is supposed a breaking away of several links in the chain to which the other unities are subservient.

The next subject which should demand our attention is, how far *horror* may be admissible in tragedy. There is a sickliness of taste, a mawkishness of refinement in the present day, which shrinks from its approach: it is not long since a British audience gave a most convincing proof of this, and at the same time built up a record to their own honour in hooting the scene in "King John," between *Herbert* and the youthful *Arthur*; truly we are mending rapidly, and it is to be hoped a time may come when we shall think with the *candid, honest Voltaire*, that Shakspeare is no better than a barbarian; the age is grown infinitely too critical to be pleased; nay, it will neither deign to smile nor shed a tear, without first instituting an enquiry how far such things may be justified—But our feelings are leading us away;—we must leave this subject to be discussed when treating of some other play, and proceed to the more immediate consideration of *Hamlet*, from which we have been too long detained.

There is nothing in the whole circle of the drama, ancient or modern, that can in any way be compared with *Hamlet*; it stands alone, a class of itself, neither second, nor like, to any other work of genius. The common-place of criticism in vain would measure out its faults and beauties; its colossal greatness mocks all such efforts; it would be no less easy to take the height of the Andes with a pair of compasses, or fathom the depths of the ocean with a fishing line. Still this quibbling age, which, like *Iago*, is "nothing if not critical," has not been able to refrain from censure: Some quarrel with the grave-diggers, and others find the inconsistencies of *Hamlet* extremely unnatural; but time, that tries all things, proves all things, still steps forth to vindicate the poet; from his tribunal there is no appeal, but then his judgment is unerring: at the first touch of his iron hand these opinions tumble into dust, and are scattered by the winds of oblivion, while all his efforts leave not the slightest mark of injury on the adamant of Shakspeare. No praise so truly speaks the merit of this admirable play, as that which the poet himself has bestowed on his divine *Cleopatra*—"Age cannot wither it, nor custom stale its infinite variety."

The beautiful character of *Hamlet* has been too often unjustly treated; he has indeed faults, great faults, amongst which irresolution is by no means the least; that he is often inconsistent with reason is

true, but when he is never inconsistent with himself; the character is preserved with matchless truth from the beginning to end; that he is full of errors implies any thing rather than a censure on the poet; had Hamlet been perfect he had not been human. There could have been no great difficulty in making him most heroically avenge his father's death upon his uncle; he might have been an Alexander in sables without any great exertion of talent on the part of the author; but such was not Shakspeare's mode of delineating character; he meant to paint a man, not to exhibit a monster, and therefore Hamlet, like other men, acts from mixed motives. If we understand the prince rightly, his imagination is stronger than his understanding; he is always busied in satisfying the cravings of a romantic fancy, picturing to himself what he will do, and thus losing the time for action in thinking upon its effects. A morbid melancholy seems to have unstrung his whole frame, and produced a mental lassitude which renders him incapable of exertion; he cannot act, but when action is literally forced upon him; never indeed does he appear so happy as when, by some subtlety of excuse, he can deceive himself and escape from the reality of deeds. His purposes and his acts are ever at variance; nor is this strange; his intents are the offspring of his excited imagination, not of understanding, and consequently when the fancy cools or turns to some other object, the intention also fades: it is a cloud sailing on the winds of evening and changing with the winds. Every line, every incident throughout the play in which he is concerned, combine to create and justify this opinion.—When the ghost appears, Hamlet is all energy; his every thought is bent upon revenge: he will forget the records of his youth, the treasures of his studious hours,—every thing—to think upon his father's wrongs and the villainy of his uncle; but the spirit passes away with the night, and with it dies his energy; his imagination, which was all his strength, has slackened; he will “have grounds more relative.”—“The spirit may be a devil.—The play's the thing.”—The play accordingly is tried, and flashes conviction upon his mind; he could “drink hot blood, and do such business as the better day would quake to look on,”—but still his resolution is the creature of impulse only, and fades with the fading impulse. It is impossible for the eye of dulness itself to miss this trait; it occurs perpetually throughout the drama; Hamlet is most consistent in his inconsistency; always irresolute, always intending, and never doing: and surely, it requires

no high degree of observation to see that such a feature is truly natural; how often do we find men great in purpose when the object is remote, yet fearing to grapple with it when time or opportunity has set it within their reach. This is a point so clear, so self-evident, that any explanation or comment seems superfluous; and so indeed it would have been, but that some critics, and those deservedly high in public estimation, have thought proper to find great fault with Hamlet on this head. The iron hand of Johnson has fallen most heavily on this play; he observes, "the apparition left the regions of the dead to little purpose; the revenge is not obtained but by the death of him, who was required to take it."—And again, a little before this, he says, "after he has by the stratagem of the play, convicted the king, he makes no attempt to punish him: and his death is at last effected by an incident, which Hamlet had no part in producing."—There can be no doubt that Hamlet would have acted more consonantly with sound reason, had he punished the king, when he first received the information of his guilt from the spirit, or at least, when the play had given him assurance, an assurance which, when coupled with the language of the ghost, it was impossible for any one to disbelieve; but Hamlet has any quality rather than sound reason; he is a creature of impulse, though he always professes to admire men of contrary habits: This, however, is the common fault with critics; they first enquire how man, generally considered, *ought* to act, not how such a *particular character would* act; and then if they find the subject of their question deficient, they, without hesitation, pronounce the character to be unnatural; as if all men squared their conduct by unerring rules, or were always equal to themselves. It is scarcely possible to read twelve pages following of any history without finding the wisest of mankind committing the silliest of actions, and exposing themselves to the censure of the vulgar reader; battles and kingdoms are lost by errors which even the most inferior talent could avoid, were it placed under similar circumstances; are we to say, that Francis did not really exist, because, with all his genius, he was the dupe of his rival Charles, the 5th of Austria? or shall we deny the existence of the same Charles because he himself was deceived by the arts of Maurice of Saxony?—We must entreat the reader's pardon for having dwelt so long upon the subject, but the cause of Shakspeare sits most nearly at our heart; he has long been our best companion, friend, instructor—nay, we might almost say,

divinity;—the habit of years has taught us to look upon him with a holy regard, and naturally makes us anxious to snatch one of his beautiful flowers from under the hoof of the critical elephant, whose heavy tread had bent though it could not crush it. If any admirer of Johnson think we treat his name with too little respect, let him consider that the humblest talent is better authorized to criticize Johnson, than he himself to attack Shakspeare; were we even in the dust, we yet should not be so far below the critic as he is below the poet, whose glory is now as the polar star, as bright and as unchangeable. Besides, the writer who could publish such idle sophistries upon Gray, and, moreover, declared against blank verse, has altogether degraded himself from the lists of criticism; he has himself proclaimed that he is no true knight, and his arms should be broken, and his name dishonoured. The fact is, and it is evinced by a thousand different declarations on his own part, that the heavy critic had no ear for the music of poesy; no verse was verse to him, unless it was distinguished as such by rhyme; he expected, what many other pretenders to wisdom expect, that poetry should address itself to the *understanding wholly*, and not at all to the imagination; his own poetry evinces this, without any other proof; it is little more than harmonious prose from which it differs only by the stated recurrence of rhymes.—But he has too long led us from our subject.

The rudeness, with which Hamlet treats Ophelia, has also been objected to, and with as little reason as any of the foregoing censures have been past. His object was to convince the world that he was essentially mad, and his conduct to Ophelia, whom he was known to love most tenderly, was of all things the best calculated to produce such belief. In fact he had no choice but to do so, or trust her with his secret, an act of confidence that would have very little corresponded with his general temper, in which suspicion is a decided feature. So nicely jealous is he in this respect, that he will not reveal the secret of the spirit's embassy even to his old college associates; nay, he is a niggard of it to his bosom friend, Horatio, and when at last circumstances require him to choose a participator in his secret, he doles it out to him with reluctance and in fragments. It is not, therefore, be a rational subject of surprise that he does not trust Ophelia, the daughter of a rank courtier, one deeply in the king's interest, one who it was notorious, borrowed his every look, thought,

and word, from the complexion of royalty, and would, moreover, have sold the fee-simple of his own salvation for a smile from the king: not trusting, his only remedy was to deceive, and this could be done in no way so effectually, as by the method he adopts. As to Johnson's remark that, "of the feigned madness of Hamlet there appears no adequate cause, for he does nothing, which might not have been done with the reputation of sanity," it is, to say the least of it, very singular. We should think a very sufficient cause might be found in apprehended danger from his uncle, who, he has just learnt, is the murderer of his father, and who might be imagined, without any violent tendency to suspicion, to entertain no very favourable designs towards the son; his first object was evidently like that of the elder Brutus, to save himself from the suspicious eye of a tyrant by feigning a state of mind that could not injure, and surely the madness of the one is as good a disguise as the idiotism of the other: he had, besides, a further cause in pretending insanity, as a cloak to his own projects against the king, who, on all occasions, betrays a most uneasy feeling towards him, a feeling which it was the interest of Hamlet to avoid as much as possible. Such considerations would have influence with any disposition, much more with a mind so constituted as that of the prince, jealous in the extreme, and almost fearing to trust himself. That this point is not strained to meet the argument may be abundantly proved; there is no one person, no one incident, throughout the play, of which Hamlet is not suspicious; he distrusts his friends, Marcellus and Bernardo, and even the affectionate Horatio he doubts the king, and yet is no less distrustful of the spirit, from whose information the guilt of the king appears—"it may be a devil,"—he will not confide in Ophelia though he loves her, and "forty thousand brothers could not with all their quantity of love make up the sum;" he is still less disposed to trust Rosencrantz or Guildenstern and openly expresses so much to them before they have uttered half a dozen sentences; the very same feeling he exhibits towards his mother when, with bitter irony, he advises her to betray the secrets of their conference to the king her husband; when on board the ship his suspicion keeps him awake and makes him "finger their packet;" and finally a similar disposition teaches him to doubt, when invited to play with Laertes;—"thou wouldst not think how ill all's here about my heart," is his simple and pathetic remark upon the exit of

the lord who brings the summons. Naturally distrustful, we find a reason for the aggravation of the feeling in his peculiar circumstances of danger; "benetted round with villainies," he knows not in whom to confide: and here we at once see the existence, and the cause of his extreme suspicion. That such a man, so situated, should have recourse to any artifice to conceal his real intents and feelings from the world is by no means wonderful; if there be any matter for surprise on this occasion, it is that Johnson should venture such a criticism; it is scarcely possible to believe that he had ever read the play, for though he had no relish for poetry, he could hardly be deceived in a point like this.

With all these defects in himself, Hamlet is still the object of our love and sympathy; there is a harmony in his mind that is exquisitely beautiful; it breathes a melancholy, but a most melodious, music, he seems like some lovely flower that has been half broken by a tempest, and looks even lovelier in its fall. Besides, the sufferings of a great mind, and Hamlet has a great mind, are always more intense than those of a weak one, as the bodily pangs of the strong man are always more acute than those of a feeble habit, and our sympathy is, for the most part, proportioned to the apparent quantity of pain endured. Nor does he lose any of our esteem from his irresolution, for it evidently does not proceed from deficiency of courage; the poet with masterly art has contrived to show us in the very outset; when his three compeers shrink from the idea of following the spirit, and Horatio draws a fearful picture of the probable consequences, he is no jot moved from his intent; he will, and does follow "though it blast him." No description of his courage could have effected so much in his behalf as this single action, for description, like distance, presents every thing in softened and diminished colours. But, indeed, the mind of Hamlet is beautiful throughout; there is not one truly leprous spot in it; the few failings, that cast a shade upon it, here and there only serve to bring out more vividly its contrasted virtues, which are of the highest kind; a being, whose very vices are akin to virtue and might often pass for it: he is brave, pious, learned, affectionate, full of fervour and fancy; all his ideas are those of an uncommon genius, that perhaps loves too much to dwell in the kingdom of the imagination, but in this he loses none of our regard; he is so evidently above us that he must command our admiration. Indeed Shakspeare has been most liberal in his gifts to this child of his exhaustless fancy; he

has exalted him pre-eminently above all the other characters in his language and sentiments; every one must feel that neither Horatio, nor Laertes, nor Ophelia, could utter such soliloquies as he does; they are evidently the creation of an unrivalled genius, are peculiar to himself, and seem, as it were, a part of his very essence. The very brightness of the other characters tend to confirm and heighten this feeling of his superiority; Horatio could not be the friend, nor Ophelia be enamoured, nor the mother and uncle stand in awe, of a common-place mind, and thus each in their respective though opposite sentiments towards him bear witness to his empire.

Ophelia is one of that class of characters which our great poet seems more particularly to have delighted in; she is at once tender, simple, and affectionate, even in her madness this matchless genius has contrived to preserve with unbroken consistency the same characteristics. She utters none of that idle jargon which inferior writers are accustomed to employ, and which, because it is not sense, they are willing to believe is the proper language of insanity, as if any nonsense bolstered up with mighty epithets and swelling phrases were synonymous with madness; her "nothing's more than matter," and never were scenes more touching than those in which Ophelia appears when deprived of her senses; they appeal directly and forcibly to the heart, and it must be a heart of stone that can resist the appeal. What, for instance, can be more beautiful, more sublimely pathetic, than Ophelia's manner of distributing the flowers? wound up as it is by the simple exclamation, "I would give you some violets, but they withered all, when my father died." This is indeed pathos, pathos that flushes the cheek and makes the eye grow dim whenever it is read, though it may have been read a thousand times before.

The constant recurrence to that one cherished idea, her father, is most strictly natural, for it is the peculiar disposition of madness to view every thing it comes in contact with in reference to some single absorbing thought that has possessed it, as a coloured glass lends its own tint to every object which is seen through it; nothing can be more erroneous than the idea which the generality of poets evidently entertain, that insanity indulges in any nonsense indiscriminately; there is most frequently a startling mixture of sense with its errors, and it always lays hold on some one idea to which it clings pertinaciously connecting and referring almost every thing to it in some way

for another. It is this exclusive and overwhelming mastery of one particular thought that constitutes madness, distinguishing it from idiotism, which does not think at all; it raves, it is true, but then its ravings have a determinate object. All this Shakspeare has shown in the wanderings of Ophelia's mind; indeed nothing can* surpass the truth of this lovely character; it is drawn with unerring hand; all the light, delicate shades, the sudden flyings off and as sudden returns to the subject, which are peculiar to insanity, he has here touched with unexampled nicety.

Polonius is a picture of no less truth; it is a character which we shall in vain look for in Greek, German, and Italian, or French tragedy. Loquacious, supple, on the very verge of dotage, the wreck of a mind, that in its best days, mistook cunning for wisdom, he contrasts delightfully with the King and Hamlet, and relieves the gloomy colouring of the scene by the exposition of a weakness, for which we can feel no sympathy. Had he been less busy and more virtuous in his dotage, he would have excited pity, and drawn down the general odium upon Hamlet; but he is so industrious in exposing himself, that we only laugh at him, and at last feel very little, if any, sorrow at his death; he "made love to the employment," and there is no reason for his being "near the conscience" of Hamlet.

As in the madness of Ophelia, Shakspeare has preserved the same tone of character that distinguished her better hours, so in the wane and second childhood of Polonius we may easily read what the old courtier once had been; it is not a picture of dotage abstractedly considered; but of dotage acting upon a peculiar character; or, in other words, enough of the original character shines through the dotage of the one, as through the madness of the other, to show what either must have been; a beauty, which we will venture to say, is to be found in no other poet whatsoever, unless perchance it should exist among

* When we say that nothing can surpass Ophelia's madness, we must be understood as speaking with reference to other authors, for without this limitation king Lear would at once contradict our assertion. But look to Racine, the Baal of the French; what can be more absurd than the wretched, bloated nonsense that Orestes utters in his madness? it is all blood, fire, and fury. If it be any thing at all, it must be the delirium of fever; it certainly is not madness.

the Spanish dramatists, * with whom we profess a very distant acquaintance, and that through the imperfect medium of German translation.

The characters of the King, Queen, and Laertes, though they would outweigh a score of French heroes and lovers, are yet drawn with less of individuality than is usual with Shakspeare; they speak beautiful speeches and are placed in excellent situations, but they have none of those nicer shades that delight us in Hamlet, Ophelia, and the old Polonius; they have no peculiar feature, no distinguishing mark; their thoughts and actions do not seem to be the necessary result of their several dispositions.

Of the spirit we hardly know what to think, and offer our opinion with considerable reluctance and doubt of its propriety. That the language of the ghost is eminently beautiful and appropriate is certain beyond all controversy; there is, indeed, a feeling of mortality in the thoughts and images of his speech, but then it is enveloped in a halo of mystery that renders all dark, and unearthly; still there is something so nearly allied to substance in the idea of language, that we have some difficulty in believing it is a spirit speaking notwithstanding the exquisite art with which that speech is managed; it at once makes us familiar with him, and flings us back on the world and its associations. Privations of any kind are terrible and sublime, whether it be of light or sound; utter darkness or utter silence are in this respect the same, for they give full scope to the fancy, whereas light and sound, on the contrary, curb the imagination by showing reality and take away that doubt which is one grand source of the sublime. Still less do we admire the armour, and other substantial appurtenances on this incorporeal being, who yields like air before the blow of a human hand; he at once loses his unearthly nature, and is levelled down to our own being; he becomes too distinct; his forms and proportions are too visibly made out; we find him such as ourselves are, and *nothing* is at an end.

In regard to the speech of the spirit, precedents might indeed be pleaded in excuse or justification, however little it may savour of im-

* Since the first edition of this play, we have taken some pains to ascertain this point, and assert without the fear of contradiction, that Spanish drama affords no contradiction.

mortality. As two examples, where many might be adduced, if many were requisite, we have first the ghost of Clytemnestra in the *Ευμενίδες* (Furies) of Æschylus, haranguing the sleeping furies, and inciting them in good set terms to pursue her son Orestes for vengeance:

ΚΛΥΤΑΙΜΝΗΣΤΡΑΣ ΕΙΔΩΛΟΝ.

Εὔδοιτ' ἄν, ὦή, καὶ καθευδουσῶν τί δέϊ;
 Ἐγὼ δ' ὑφ' ὑμῶν ὧδ' ἀπητιμασμένη
 Ἀλλοισιν ἐν νεκροῖσιν, ὥς μὲν ἔκτανον,
 Ὀνειδος ἐν φθιτοῖσιν οὐκ ἐκλείπεται,
 Αἰσχρῶς δ' ἀλῶμαι, προὔννεπα δ' ὑμῖν ὅτι
 Ἐχω μεγίστην αἰτίαν κείνων ὑπο·
 Παθοῦσα δ' οὕτω δειγὰ πρὸς τῶν φιλότατων,
 Οὐδεὶς ὑπέρ μου δαιμόνων μηνίεται,
 Κατασφαγείσης πρὸς χειρῶν μητροκτόνων.
 Ὅρα' τε πληγὰς τὰςδε καρδίας ἔθεν.
 Εὐδουσα γὰρ φρὴν ὄμμασιν λαμπρύνεται,
 Ἐν ἡμέρᾳ δὲ μοῖρ ἀπρόσκοπος βροτῶν.
 Ἡ πολλὰ μὲν δὴ τῶν ἐμῶν ἐλείξατε,
 Λοὰς τ' αἰίνους, νηφάλια μειλίγματα,
 Καὶ νυκτίσεμνα δεῖπν' ἐπ' ἐσχάρᾳ πυρὸς
 ἔθουον ὥραν οὐδενὸς κοινὴν θεῶν.
 Καὶ πάντα ταῦτα λάξ ὁρῶ πατούμενα.
 Ὁ δ' ἐξαλύξας οἴχεται νεβροῦ δίκην,
 Καὶ ταῦτα κούφως ἐκ μέσων ἀρκυστάτων
 Ὄρουσεν, ὑμῖν ἐγκατιλλώνιας μέγα.
 Ἀκούσαθ' ὧν ἔλεξα· τῆς δὲ μὴ περὶ
 Ψυχῆς φρονήσατ', ὧ κατὰ χθονὸς θναί'.
 Ὅναρ γὰρ ὑμᾶς νῦν Κλυταιμνήστρα καλῶ.

ΧΟΡΟΣ.

(μυγμός.)

ΚΛΥΤΑΙΜΝΗΣΤΡΑ.

Μύζοιτ' ἄν, ἄνῃρ δ' οἴχεται φεύγων πρόσω.
 Φίλοις γὰρ εἰσὶν οὐκ ἐμοὶ προσέκτορες.

ΧΟΡΟΣ.

(μυγμός.)

ΚΛΥΤΑΙΜΝΗΣΤΡΑ.

"Αγαν ὑπνώσσεις, κοῦ κατοικτίξεις πάθος·
Φονεὺς δ' Ὀρέστης τῆςδε μητρὸς οἴχεται.

ΧΟΡΟΣ.

(ὠγμός.)

ΚΛΥΤΑΙΜΝΗΣΤΡΑ.

ὦλεις; ὑπνώσσεις; οὐκ ἀναστήσει τάχος;
Τί σοι πεπρακται πράγμα, πλὴν τεύχειν κακά;

ΧΟΡΟΣ.

(ὠγμός.)

ΚΛΥΤΑΙΜΝΗΣΤΡΑ.

"Υπνος πόνος τε κύριοι ξυνωμόται
Δεινῆς δρακαίνης ἐξεκήραναν μένος.

ΧΟΡΟΣ.

(μυγμός διπλοῦς ὀξύς.)

Λάβε, λάβε, λάβε, λάβε, φράζου.

ΚΛΥΤΑΙΜΝΗΣΤΡΑ.

"Οναρ διώκεις θῆρα——

And again, in the *Hecuba* of Euripides, we find the ghost of Polydorus opening the play, and telling the audience the history of his birth, parentage, and education; this latter, indeed, is the most courteous of all ghosts, the very pink of politeness and good-will, for he takes the trouble of travelling all the way from hell, for no other purpose but to explain the business of the play to the spectators: the only fault that can possibly be found with him is loquacity and egotism; no German nobleman ever dwelt with more relish upon his ancestors than does this communicative spirit upon the story of who begot him; no thing could be more in point than this worthy gentleman; but Shakespeare is not a man to be excused or condemned by precedent; he is the master, the sole monarch of his art, by whose laws others are to be tried, not he to be adjudged by their tribunal. We do not, however, take upon ourselves to decide against the poet; we simply read

to state our doubts, and we trust it has been done with that modesty which becomes every critic in writing upon the immortal Shakspeare; on all occasions it is much more easy to censure than to convict of error; more especially then will this be the case when treating of one who in himself has shown the utmost boundary of human genius, and which has not hitherto been even approached by the combined talent of many ages and many nations.

The scene between Hamlet, Horatio, and the Grave-digger, though it has ever been a stumbling-block to the French critics, is not only a beautiful scene, but one of the *most* beautiful that ever came from the pen of genius; of course we speak of it as it is written, not as it is acted, which is in direct opposition to the author's meaning, and rather seems intended for a burlesque than a just representation. The apathy of the Grave-digger to his employment, proceeding from long custom and the natural coarseness of a vulgar mind—his "jowling the skulls to the ground," his singing while he works, contrasted on the other hand with the feverish sensitiveness of Hamlet, and the calmness of Horatio, who is by nature, more than by education, a philosopher—the opposite remarks of each party, so strongly coloured by the mind and habits of the person speaking—all combined, form a scene of unrivalled excellence and mastery over the feelings. The utter darkness of the clown, like a dark ground in a picture, throws off more strongly the light that emanates from Hamlet; his language considered by itself would excite laughter, for it is coarse and vulgar; though at the same time it has a strong tincture of knavish shrewdness; but coupled with Hamlet's mournful and exquisite remarks, it lends a sterner solemnity to the whole, and teaches most painfully the unity of human greatness. Never was any thing more skilfully contrived, or more powerfully executed, than this scene; however opposite the feelings of Hamlet and the clown, and however suited their respective speeches to these feelings, still they harmonize by their freeing tendency to one end. To avoid still more the unpleasant effect of too decided a contrast, which always appears the result of artifice and therefore unnatural, the poet has brought forward Horatio, who equally remote from the apathy of the one, or the high-wrought sensibility of the other, softens, and unites the two extremes. The effect is at last carried to its utmost, by the appearance of Yorick's skull; the different recollections which the two parties entertain of

him whose soul had once informed it, the place, the time, at which the meeting occurs—by the half-dug grave of the newly drowned Ophelia, in the very hour that the bell is calling her to her last home—can any thing be conceived more pathetic, more sublime?

If we consider the plot in its individual parts, we may perhaps find some few scenes that do not materially assist the progress of the story; but they are so rich in poetry, and tend so admirably to the development of the various characters, that he must be a heavy critic who would consent to lose them. If we must call this a fault, it is at least a fault that carries its own excuse in its beauty. Shakspeare not only gave the full measure, but more than measure; his mind was wonderfully exuberant, and sometimes, like a flooded river, poured forth its treasures too abundantly.

The catastrophe has been much censured, and always most unjustly, as if it had not weight corresponding with the substance of the fable. The fault, however, is in that craving appetite for the wonderful which diseases the many, and not in the immortal poet; he well knew that the most important events in real life were often, nay usually, brought about by means of very inferior dignity, and not only on this, but on almost all other occasions, he has employed the same species of development.* The habit of the present day expects a catastrophe of surprise; the different threads of the story are not to be gradually unravelled, but suddenly cut; a play, like an epigram, must finish with a point. It would be very difficult to tell what is gained by this innova-

* The great German Dramatist, Schiller, who was one of Shakspeare's warmest admirers, has most literally and invariably copied our poet in this respect. In the Robbers, Charles de Moor ends the play by a long soliloquy, in which he declares his intention of surrendering himself to justice; Don Carlos is finished by the King giving up his son to the Grand Inquisitor; Fiesco ends, by the republican conspirator declaring he will again join Dorig, from whom he has revolted. Indeed, throughout all his plays, we find the same sort of catastrophe, except in *The Jungfrau von Orleans*, (*Maid of Orleans*), which concludes by Johanna, the Joan of Arc, seeing Heaven open in a vision and then expiring. But, truth to say, our glorious Shakspeare has always been more justly appreciated by the Germans than by his countrymen. The acute, the eloquent Hazlitt, has indeed done more

tion, whereas it is a slight matter to see that truth and beauty are sacrificed by it; the very ground-work of it is a substitution of pantomimic action for words; but unfortunately people use more language than action. An admirable instance of this false beauty may be found in the family party at the end of the "Stranger;" for aught we know it forms a very pretty picture, yet it certainly has no prototype in nature; the kneeling, the dumb embrace, with master and miss on either side, and half a dozen frisky spectators grouped into attitudes like the leaden Mercury in a bowling-green, will no where be found except upon the stage: in life we do not so much appeal to the eye as to the ear; even those who use most action, use it only as a secondary to enforce their words, and not as a substitute for them.

Looking at the fable as a whole, it appears to abound in well-contrived and interesting incidents, which follow each other with wonderful celerity; yet at the same time the progress of the story to its end is by no means so rapid as is usual in the plays of Shakspeare; this chiefly arises from the character of Hamlet, whose uncertainty and irresolution seem to make the story always beginning, and never-ending; it therefore cannot be charged as a defect to the poet, though it makes many curtailments necessary in the representation of the play: to the reader of judgment there is not a single superfluous line. This difference of feeling between the spectator and the reader must occur more or less, in all dramas; nor is it difficult to see why it should be so; it is seldom that actors of established reputation will undertake second-rate parts, and thus the inferior parts, which necessarily have

nothing to do with himself and the nation, but the people, generally speaking, whether high or low, are not a poetical people; they admire Shakspeare, because they are told they ought to admire him; but they are not for that a jot the more sensible of his extraordinary merits. As for horror, they have one and all a most decided aversion to it; their delicate nerves are not to be shaken.

Before concluding this long note, we would just quote another of Johnson's remarks, which will show how admirably he was calculated for a critic on Shakspeare.---"The pretended madness of Hamlet causes much mirth." We cannot for a moment suppose that Johnson did not understand what he read, but is very fair to conclude that he had not read the play when he undertook to write the criticism.

few situations, and are only employed to speak that which could not be spoken by the others with propriety, fall into the hands of those who are least capable of recitation: unsupported by action as these characters are, talent of the first kind would find it no easy matter to go through with them, and when therefore they are allotted inferior abilities, they are tedious, and must be shortened.

The language of this play is more stately, something of a more didactic cast, than we find in the other dramas: there is not that decided difference in the speech of the different characters, at least as far as manner and melody are concerned; in ideas, as we have before observed, Hamlet towers far above all that are connected with him in the scene. The verse is lofty, flowing, and harmonious, swelling on the ear like the majestic pealing of an organ. That some exceptions may be found to this, is true, more particularly in the speeches of the mad Ophelia, many of which possess a touching simplicity, yet the general tone of the play bears out our first assertion. It follows of course, that the language has not that pithiness, that condensed energy, that hurry of ideas, which are elsewhere to be noted. King Lear, above all, affords an illustration of our meaning; there, the ideas are huddled one upon another with inconceivable rapidity; the verse does not flow, but gushes along like a torrent; metaphors abound, but not as ornaments; they are only employed for the quicker conveyance of the ideas; the whole force of Shakspeare's unequalled mind is poured forth without stint or measure, and his great anxiety seems to be, to give as much of it as possible; if we may be allowed the expression in the absence of a better, it is a play of *emphasis*. Hamlet, on the contrary, though perhaps not inferior, is purely poetical, and in that respect, as well as in its rich variety, leaves far behind it the loftiest efforts of the Grecian school; indeed, were it possible for all his other beautiful works to be destroyed, this play alone would set the name of Shakspeare above the poets of any time or nation, with which the world has hitherto been acquainted.

G. S.

Costume.

HAMLET.

Black doublet, trunks, cloak, and hose, of rich silk velvet, elegantly rimmed with bugles, buttons, and satin.

KING.

Black velvet doublet, and trunks, crimson velvet robe, elegantly rimmed with gold.

POLONIUS.

Crimson doublet, and trunks, and cloak trimmed with gold.

LAERTES.

First dress.—Green doublet, trunks, and cloak, trimmed with silver.
—Second dress.—Black velvet, ditto, ditto, with bugles and buttons.

HORATIO.

Scarlet doublet, trunks, and cloak, trimmed with silver.

ROSENCRANTZ.

Blue doublet, trunks, and cloak, trimmed with silver.

GUILDENSTERN.

Purple doublet, trunks, and cloak, trimmed with silver.

OSRICK.

White doublet, trunks, and cloak, trimmed with silver.

OFFICERS.

Buff doublets, trunks, and cloaks, trimmed with silver.

PRIEST.

Black gown, with rosary and russet sandals.

OPHELIA.

First dress.—White satin, trimmed with silver; and spangled drapery.—Second dress.—Plain white muslin, and plain white muslin veil.

QUEEN.

White satin dress, trimmed with silver; blue velvet robe: veil in the fourth act.

PLAYER QUEEN.

First dress.—Grey calico, grey calico scarf, and hat, trimmed with pink points.—Second dress.—White satin petticoat, trimmed with gold; black velvet train; dress short in front, and trimmed with gold.

VIRGINS.

Plain white dresses.

Persons Represented.

	<i>Drury Lane.</i>	<i>Coven, up ^{down}</i>
<i>Hamlet</i>	Mr. Kean.	Mr. Bung.
<i>King</i>	Mr. Powell.	Mr. Chapman.
<i>Polonius</i>	Mr. Munden.	Mr. Blanchard.
<i>Laertes</i>	Mr. Wallack.	Mr. Abbott.
<i>Horatio</i>	Mr. Holland.	Mr. B. Thornton.
<i>Rosencrantz</i>	Mr. Kent.	Mr. Treby.
<i>Guildestern</i>	Mr. Fisher.	Mr. Claremont.
<i>Osric</i>	Mr. Penley.	Mr. Farley.
<i>Marcellus</i>	Mr. Miller.	Mr. King.
<i>Bernardo</i>	Mr. Cooke.	Mr. Jeffries.
<i>Francisco</i>	Mr. Evans.	Mr. Crumpton.
<i>Priest</i>	Mr. Carr.	Mr. Penn.
<i>Sailor</i>	Mr. Ebsworth.	
2 <i>Sailor</i>	Mr. Appleby.	Mr. Comer.
1 <i>Actor</i>	Mr. Maddocks.	Mr. Atkins.
2 <i>Actor</i>	Mr. Minton.	Mr. Emery.
1 <i>Gravedigger</i>	Mr. Downton.	Mr. Menage.
2 <i>Gravedigger</i>	Mr. Hughes.	Mr. Egerton.
<i>Ghost</i>	Mr. Pope.	
<i>Gertrude</i>	Mrs. Brereton.	Mrs. Egerton.
<i>Ophelia</i>	Miss Kelly.	Miss Matthews.
<i>Actress</i>	Miss Tidswell.	Miss Logan.

* Time of Representation.

The time this piece takes in representation is about three hours and seventeen minutes. The first act occupies the space of fifty-one minutes;—the second, thirty;—the third, fifty;—the fourth, thirty;—and the fifth, thirty-six.—The half-price commences at nine o'clock.

Stage Directions.

By R.H.	is meant.	Right Hand.
L.H.		Left Hand.
S.E.		Second Entrance.
U.E.		Upper Entrance.
M.D.		Middle Door.
D.F.		Door in Flat.
R.H.D.		Right Hand Door.
L.H.D.		Left Hand Door.

HAMLET.⁽¹⁾

ACT I.

SCENE I.—*Elsinore.—A Platform before the Palace.—Moonlight.*

FRANCISCO *on his Post, R.H.S.E.—Enter to him* BERNARDO, L.H.

Ber. Who's there?

Fran. Nay, answer me (2) :—stand, and unfold yourself.

Ber. Long live the king ! (3)

Fran. Bernardo ?

Ber. He.

Fran. You come most carefully upon your hour.

Ber. 'Tis now struck twelve ; get thee to bed, Francisco.

Fran. For this relief, much thanks :—'tis bitter cold,

and I am sick at heart. (Crosses to L.H.)

Ber. Have you had quiet guard ?

Fran. Not a mouse stirring.

Ber. Well, good night.

If you do meet Horatio and Marcellus,

The rivals (4) of my watch, bid them make haste.

(Retires to R.H.)

Fran. I think I hear them.—Stand, ho ! Who is there ?

(1) The story is taken from Saxo Grammaticus' Danish History.

(2) *i.e. me* who am already on the watch, and have a right to demand the watch-word.

(3) The watch word.

(4) *Rivals*—partners.

Enter HORATIO and MARCELLUS, L.H.

Hor. Friends to this ground.

Mar. And liegemen to the Dane.

Fran. Give you good night. (*Crosses to L.H.*)

Mar. O, farewell, honest soldier!

Who hath reliev'd you?

Fran. Bernardo hath my place.

Give you good night.

[*Exit, L.H.*]

Mar. Holloa! Bernardo!

Ber. Say.

What, is Horatio there?

Hor. A piece of him. (*Giving his hand*)

Ber. Welcome, Horatio; welcome, good Marcellus.

Hor. What, has this thing appear'd again to-night?

Ber. I have seen nothing.

Mar. Horatio says, 'tis but our fantasy:

And will not let belief take hold of him,

Touching this dreaded sight, twice seen of us;

Therefore I have entreated him along

With us to watch the minutes of this night;

That, if again this apparition come,

He may approve (1) our eyes, and speak to it.

Hor. Tush! tush! 'twill not appear.

Ber. Come, let us once again assail your ears,

That are so fortified against our story,

What we two nights have seen.

Hor. Well, let us hear Bernardo speak of this.

Ber. Last night of all,

When yon same star, that's westward from the pole,

Had made his course to illumine that part of heaven

Where now it burns, Marcellus, and myself,

The bell then beating one,—

Mar. Peace, break thee off: look, where it comes again!

(1) *Approve our eyes.*—i.e.—confirm the evidence of our eyes.

Enter GHOST, L.H.

Ber. In the same figure, like the king that's dead.

Hor. Most like:—it harrows me with fear and
ponder.

Ber. It would be spoke to.

Mar. Speak to it, Horatio.

Hor. What art thou, that usurp'st this time of
night,

Together with that fair and warlike form,

In which the majesty of buried Denmark

Did sometimes march? By heaven, I charge thee,
speak. *(Ghost Crosses to R.H.)*

Mar. It is offended.

Ber. See! it stalks away.

Hor. Stay; speak; speak, I charge thee, speak.

[Exit Ghost, R.H.]

Mar. 'Tis gone, and will not answer.

Ber. How, now, Horatio? you tremble and look
pale:

Is not this something more than fantasy?

What think you of it?

Hor. I might not this believe,
Without the sensible and true avouch
Of mine own eyes.

Mar. Is it not like the king?

Hor. As thou art to thyself:
Such was the very armour he had on,
When he the ambitious Norway combated.

Mar. Thus, twice before, and jump (1) at this dead
hour,

With martial stalk he hath gone by our watch.

Hor. In what particular thought to work, I know
not;

(1) *Jump* at this dead hour—the prompt copy reads “*just* at this dead hour”—It has precisely the same signification; but we see no reason for admitting the innovation.

But, in the gross and scope of mine opinion,
This bodes some strange eruption to our state.

Re-enter GHOST, R.H.

But, soft ; behold ! lo, where it comes again !
I'll cross it, though it blast me. (*Ghost crosses to L.H.*)

Stay, illusion !

If thou hast any sound, or use of voice,
Speak to me :

If there be any good thing to be done,
That may to thee do ease, and grace to me,
Speak to me.

If thou art privy to thy country's fate,
Which, happily, fore-knowing may avoid—
Oh, speak !

Or, if thou hast uphoarded in thy life
Extorted (1) treasure in the womb of the earth,
For which, they say, you spirits oft walk in death,
Speak of it :—[*Exit Ghost, L.H.*—stay, and speak.

Mar. 'Tis gone !

We do it wrong, being so majestic,
To offer it the show of violence.

Ber. It was about to speak, when the cock crew.

Hor. And then it started like a guilty thing
Upon a fearful summons. I have heard,
The cock, that is the trumpet to the morn,
Doth, with his lofty and shrill-sounding throat,
Awake the god of day ; and, at his warning,
Whether in sea or fire, in earth or air,
The extravagant (2) and erring spirit hies
To his confine.

But, look, the morn, in russet mantle clad,
Walks o'er the dew of yon high eastern hill :
Break we our watch up ; (*Crosses to L.H.*) and, to
my advice,

(1) *Extorted*, i.e. unjustly extorted from thy subjects.

(2) *Extravagant* is here employed in the appropriate sense of “*deriving beyond a given limit*,” though modern custom has confined the meaning to excess in the use of money.

Let us impart what we have seen to-night
 Unto young Hamlet; for, upon my life,
 This spirit, dumb to us, will speak to him.

[*Exeunt*, L.H.]

SCENE II.—*The Palace.—Flourish of Trumpets.*

Enter POLONIUS, the KING, QUEEN, HAMLET, Ladies
 and Attendants, L.H. LAERTES, R.H.

King. Though yet of Hamlet, our dear brother's
 death,

The memory be green; and that it us befitted
 To bear our hearts in grief, and our whole kingdom
 To be contracted in one brow of woe;
 Yet so far hath discretion fought with nature,
 That we, with wisest sorrow, think on him,
 Together with remembrance of ourselves.
 Therefore our sometime sister now our queen,
 The imperial jointress of this warlike state,
 Have we, as 'twere with a defeated joy,
 Taken to wife; nor have we herein barr'd
 Your better wisdoms, which have freely gone
 With this affair along:—for all, our thanks.—
 And now, Laertes, what's the news with you?
 You told us of some suit.—What is't, Laertes?

Laer. My dread lord,
 Your leave and favour to return to France;
 From whence, though willingly, I came to Denmark,
 To show my duty in your coronation;
 Yet now, I must confess, that duty done,
 My thoughts and wishes bend again toward France,
 And bow them to your gracious leave and pardon.

King. Have you your father's leave? What says
 Polonius?

Pol. He hath, my lord;
 I do beseech you, give him leave to go.

King. Take thy fair hour, Laertes; time be thine,
 And thy best graces; spend it at thy will.

~~But~~ now, my cousin Hamlet, and my son—

Ham. A little more than kin, and less than kind. *(Aside)*

King. How is it that the clouds still hang on you?

Ham. Not so, my lord; I am too much i' the sun.

Queen. Good Hamlet, cast thy nighted colour off,
And let thine eye look like a friend on Denmark.

Do not, for ever, with thy veiled⁽²⁾ lids,

Seek for thy noble father in the dust:

Thou know'st 'tis common; all, that live must die,
Passing through nature to eternity.

Ham. Ay, madam, it is common.

Queen. If it be,

Why seems it so particular with thee?

Ham. Seems, madam! nay it is; I know not seems.

'Tis not alone my inky cloak, good mother,

Nor the dejected haviour of the visage,

No, nor the fruitful river in the eye,

Together with all forms, modes, shows of grief,

That can denote me truly: these, indeed, seem,

For they are actions that a man might play;

But I have that within, which passeth show;

These but the trappings and the suits of woe.

King. 'Tis sweet, and commendable in your nature,

Hamlet,

To give these mourning duties to your father:

But, you must know, your father lost a father;

That father lost, lost his; and the survivor bound

In filial obligation, for some term,

To do obsequious sorrow: but to persevere (3)

In obstinate condolment, is a course

Of impious stubbornness; 'tis unmanly grief;

(1) *Kind* is the Teutonic word for child.

(2) *Veiled lids*—i.e.—cast down to earth.—To veil is to bow, bend downwards. Mr. Kemble reads *veiled*.

(3) *Persevere*: "Persevere in it, and good men,
With saints and angels, say amen."

Maid of Honour, a. 5, s. 2.

"———My best lady,

Persevere in it."—*Virgin Martyr*, a. 1, s. 1.

"———To wrong another,

And one she knows not, aye, and to *persevere*."

The Fox, a. 4, s.

flows a will most incorrect (1) to heaven,
 We pray you, throw to earth
 This unprevailing (2) woe, and think of us
 As of a father; for let the world take note,
 You are the most immediate to our throne,
 Our chiefest courtier, cousin, and our son.

(*The Courtiers salute Hamlet.*)

Queen. Let not thy mother lose her prayers, Ham-
 let,

I pray thee, stay with us, go not to Wittenberg.

Ham. I shall, in all my best, obey you, madam.

King. Why, 'tis a loving and a fair reply;
 Be as ourself in Denmark.—Madam, come;
 This gentle and unforc'd accord of Hamlet
 Sits smiling to my heart; in grace whereof,
 No jocund health, that Denmark drinks to-day,
 But the great cannon to the clouds shall tell,
 Re-speaking earthly thunder. (*Flourish of Trumpets.*)

[*Exeunt; Polonius, R.H. King, Queen, Laertes,
 Ladies, and Courtiers, R.H.S.E.*]

Ham. O, that this too, too solid flesh would melt,
 Thaw, and resolve itself into a dew!
 Or that the Everlasting had not fix'd
 His canon 'gainst self-slaughter! God! O God!
 How weary, stale, flat, and unprofitable
 Seem to me all the uses of this world!
 Fie on't! O fie! 'tis an unweeded garden,
 That grows to seed; things rank and gross in nature,
 Possess it merely. That it should come to this!
 But two months dead!—nay, not so much, not two—
 So excellent a king; that was, to this,
 Hyperion to a satyr: so loving to my mother,
 That he might not beteem the winds of heaven
 Visit her face too roughly. Heaven and earth!
 Must I remember? Why, she would hang on him,
 As if increase of appetite had grown

(1) *Incorrect*, seems to be here used, improperly enough, for *incorrigible*; a will stubborn and unyielding to the divine laws;—some explain it by *untutored*.

(2) *Unprevailing*—unavailing.

By what it fed on—and yet, within a month—
 Let me not think on't;—Frailty, thy name is woman!—
 A little month; or ere those shoes were old,
 With which she followed my poor father's body,
 Like Niobe, all tears;—
 She married with my uncle,
 My father's brother; but no more like my father,
 Than I to Hercules.
 It is not, nor it cannot come to, good;—
 But break, my heart: for I must hold my tongue!
 (*Going towards L.H.*)

Enter HORATIO, MARCELLUS, and BERNARDO, R.H.D.

Hor. Hail to your lordship!

Ham. I am glad to see you well:

Horatio,—or I do forget myself?

Hor. The same, my lord, and your poor servant
 ever.

Ham. Sir, my good friend; I'll change that name
 with you.

And what make you from Wittenberg, Horatio?—

Marcellus? (*Crosses to Marcellus.*)

Mar. My good lord—.

Ham. I am very glad to see you—Good even, sir—

But what, in faith, make you from Wittenberg?

Hor. A truant disposition, good my lord.

Ham. I would not hear your enemy say so;

Nor shall you do mine ear that violence,

To make it truster of your own report

Against yourself: I know you are no truant.

But, what is your affair in Elsinore?

We'll teach you to drink deep, ere you depart.

Hor. My lord, I came to see your father's funeral.

Ham. I pray thee, do not mock me, fellow-student;
 I think it was to see my mother's wedding.

Hor. Indeed, my lord, it followed hard upon.

Ham. Thrift, thrift, Horatio! the funeral bak'd
 meats

Did coldly furnish forth the marriage tables.

Could I had met my dearest (1) foe in heaven,
Or ever I had seen that day, Horatio!
My father—methinks, I see my father.

Hor. Where,
My lord?

Ham. In my mind's eye, Horatio.

Hor. I saw him once, he was a goodly king.

Ham. He was a man, take him for all in all,
I shall not look upon his like again. (*Crosses to L.H.*)

Hor. My lord, I think I saw him yesternight.

Ham. Saw! who?

Hor. My lord, the king, your father.

Ham. The king, my father!

Hor. Season (2) your admiration for awhile
With an attent (3) ear; till I may deliver,
Upon the witness of these gentlemen,
This marvel to you.

Ham. For heaven's love, let me hear.

Hor. Two nights together had these gentlemen,
Marcellus and Bernardo, on their watch,
In the dead waste (4) and middle of the night,
Been thus encounter'd :—a figure like your father,
Armed at point, (5) exactly cap-à-pé,
Appears before them, and, with solemn march,
Goes slow and stately by them: thrice he walk'd,
By their oppress'd and fear-surprised eyes,
Within his truncheon's length; whilst they, distill'd
Almost to jelly with the act (6) of fear,
Stand dumb and speak not to him. This to me
In dreadful secrecy impart they did;
And I with them, the third night, kept the watch:
Where, as they had deliver'd, both in time,
Form of the thing, each word made true and good,
The apparition comes.

Ham. But where was this?

(1) *Dearest*---*Bitterest*---to *dere* or *deare*, from which it is derived signifies to annoy, to injure; it is far from being an uncommon expression with our old writers.

(2) *Season*---moderate.

(3) *Attentive*.

(4) *Middle*.

(5) *All points*.

(6) *Act* is here employed, not very correctly, for *action*.

Mar. My lord, upon the platform where we watch'd,

Ham. Did you not speak to it?

Hor. My lord, I did;

But answer made it none; yet once, methought,

It lifted up its head, and did address

Itself to motion, like as it would speak;

But, even then, the morning cock crew (1) loud;—

And, at the sound, it shrunk in haste away,

And vanish'd from our sight.

Ham. 'Tis very strange.

Hor. As I do live, my honour'd lord, 'tis true;

And we did think it writ down in our duty,

To let you know of it.

Ham. Indeed, indeed, sirs: but this troubles me.—

Hold you the watch to-night?

Mar. We do, my lord.

Ham. Arm'd, say you?

Mar. Arm'd, my lord.

Ham. From top to toe?

Mar. My lord, from head to foot.

Ham. Then saw you not his face?

Hor. O yes, my lord, he wore his beaver up.

Ham. What, look'd he frowningly?

Hor. A countenance more

In sorrow than in anger.

Ham. Pale, or red?

Hor. Nay, very pale.

Ham. And fix'd his eyes upon you?

Hor. Most constantly.

Ham. I would I had been there.

Hor. It would have much amaz'd you.

Ham. Very like,

Very like:—stay'd it long?

Hor. While one, with moderate haste,
Might tell a hundred.

Mar. Longer, longer.

Hor. Not when I saw it.

Ham. His beard was grizzled?—no?

(1) The moment of the evanescence of spirits was supposed to be limited to the crowing of the cock.

Hor. It was, as I have seen it in his life,
A sable silver'd.

Ham. I will watch to-night ;
Perchance, 'twill walk again.

Hor. I warrant 'twill.

Ham. If it assume my noble father's person,
I'll speak to it, though hell itself should gape,
And bid me hold my peace. (*Crosses to L.H.*) I pray
you all,

If you have hitherto conceal'd this sight,
Let it be tenable in your silence still ;
And whatsoever else shall hap to-night,
Give it an understanding, but no tongue ;
I will requite your loves : so, fare you well :
Upon the platform, 'twixt eleven and twelve,
I'll visit you.

Hor. Our duty to your honour.

Ham. Your loves, as mine to you : farewell.

[*Exit, all but Hamlet, R.H.D.*

My father's spirit !—in arms !—all is not well ;
I doubt some foul play : 'would the night were come !
Till then sit still, my soul : foul deeds will rise,
Though all the earth o'erwhelm them, to men's eyes.

[*Exit, L.H.D.*

SCENE III.—*An Apartment in Polonius' House.*

Enter LAERTES and OPHELIA, R.H.

Laer. My necessities are embark'd ; farewell ;
And, sister, as the winds give benefit,
Pray, let me hear from you.

Oph. Do you doubt that ?

Laer. For Hamlet, and the trifling of his favour,
Hold it a fashion, and a toy in blood ;
He may not, as unvalued persons do,
Carve for himself ; for on his choice depends
The safety and the health of the whole state ;
Then weigh what loss your honour may sustain,
If with too credent ear you list his songs ;
Ophelia, fear it, my dear sister ;

And keep you in the rear of your affection,
 Out of the shot and danger of desire ;
 The chariest maid is prodigal enough,
 If she unmask her beauty to the moon.

Oph. I shall the effect of this good lesson keep
 As watchman to my heart. But, good my brother,
 Do not, as some ungracious pastors do,
 Show me the steep and thorny way to heaven :
 Whilst, like a reckless libertine,
 Himself the primrose path of dalliance treads,
 And recks not his own read. (1)

Laer. O fear me not,
 I stay too long ;—But here my father comes.

Enter POLONIUS, L.H.

Pol. Yet here, Laertes ! aboard, aboard, for shame
 The wind sits in the shoulder of your sail,
 And you are staid for.

Laer. Most humbly do I take my leave, my lord.
 Farewell, Ophelia, and remember well
 What I have said to you,

Oph. 'Tis in my memory lock'd,
 And you yourself shall keep the key of it.

Laer. Farewell. [*Exit, L.H.*]

Pol. What is't, Ophelia, he hath said to you ?

Oph. So please you, something touching the lord
 Hamlet.

Pol. Marry, well bethought ;
 'Tis told to me, he hath very oft of late
 Given private time to you ; and you yourself
 Have of your audience been most free and bounteous
 If it be so, (as so 'tis put one
 And that in way of caution,) I must tell you,
 You do not understand yourself so clearly,
 As it behoves my daughter, and your honour.
 What is between you ? give me up the truth.

Oph. He hath, my lord, of late made many tender
 Of his affection to me.

Pol. Affection? puh! you speak like a green girl,
Unsifted (1) in such perilous circumstance.

Do you believe his tenders, as you call them?

Oph. I do not know, my lord, what I should think.

Pol. Marry, I'll teach you: think yourself a baby;
That you have ta'en these tenders for true pay,
Which are not sterling. Tender yourself more dearly;
Or you'll tender me a fool.

Oph. My lord, he hath importun'd me with love,
In honourable fashion.

Pol. Aye, fashion you may call it: go to, go to.

Oph. And hath given countenance to his speech, my
lord,
With almost all the holy vows of heaven.

Pol. Aye, springes to catch woodcocks. I do know,
When the blood burns, how prodigal the soul
Lends the tongue vows.

This is for all,—

I would not, in plain terms, from this time forth,
Have you so slander (2) any moment's leisure,
As to give words or talk with the lord Hamlet.
Look to't, I charge you; (*Crosses to R.H.*) come your
ways.

Oph. I shall obey, my lord. [*Exeunt, R.H.*]

SCENE IV.—*The Platform.*

Enter HAMLET, HORATIO, and MARCELLUS, R.H.U.E.

Ham. The air bites shrewdly; it is very cold.

Hor. (R.H.) It is a nipping and an eager (3) air.

Ham. What hour now?

Hor. I think, it lacks of twelve.

Mar. No, it is struck.

Hor. I heard it not; it then draws near the season,
Wherein the spirit held his wont to walk.

(*Flourish of Trumpets and Drums, and Ord-
nance shot off, within.*)

(1) Unsifted—untried.

(2) Lose any moment's leisure.

(3) Sharp, *aigre*. *Fr.*

HAMLET.

What does this mean, my lord? (*Crosses to L.H.*)

Ham. The king doth wake to-night, and takes his rouse; (1)

And as he drains his draughts of Rhenish down,
The kettle-drum and trumpet thus bray out
The triumph of his pledge.

Hor. Is it a custom?

Ham. Aye, marry, is't:

But to my mind,—though I am native here,
And to the manner born,—it is a custom
More honour'd in the breach, than the observance.

Enter GHOST, L.H.

Hor. Look, my lord, it comes!

Ham. Angels and ministers of grace defend us!—
Be thou a spirit of health, or goblin damn'd,
Bring with thee airs from heaven, or blasts from hell,
Be thy intents wicked, or charitable,
Thou com'st in such a questionable (2) shape,
That I will speak to thee: I'll call thee Hamlet,
King, father!—Royal Dane; O, answer me!
Let me not burst in ignorance! but tell,
Why thy canoniz'd bones, hearsed in death,
Have burst their cerements! why the sepulchre,
Wherein we saw thee quietly in-urn'd,
Hath op'd his ponderous and marble jaws,
To cast thee up again! What may this mean,
That thou, dead corse, again, in complete steel,
Revisit'st thus the glimpses of the moon,
Making night hideous; and we fools of nature,
So horridly to shake our disposition, (3)
With thoughts beyond the reaches of our souls?
Say, why is this? wherefore? what should we do?

(*Ghost beckons.*)

Hor. It beckons you to go away with it,
As if it some impartment did desire
To you alone.

(1) *Rouse*---a full glass, a bumper.

(2) *Questionable*---inviting question; provoking question.

(3) *Disposition*---frame.

Mar. Look with what courteous action
It waves you to a more removed (1) ground :
But do not go with it.

Hor. No, by no means.

Ham. It will not speak ; then I will follow it.

Hor. Do not, my lord.

Ham. Why, what should be the fear ?
I do not set my life at a pin's fee ;
And, for my soul, what can it do to that,
Being a thing immortal as itself ?—
It waves me forth again ;—I'll follow it.

Hor. What, if it tempt you toward the flood, my
lord ? *(Takes Hamlet's right hand.)*
Or to the dreadful summit of the cliff,
And there assume some other horrible form,
And draw you into madness ?

Ham. It waves me still ;—
Go on, I'll follow thee. *(Crosses to L.H.)*

Mar. You shall not go, my lord.
(Takes Hamlet's left hand.)

Ham. Hold off your hands.

Hor. Be rul'd, you shall not go.

Ham. My fate cries out,
And makes each petty artery in this body
As hardy as the Némean lion's nerve. *(Ghost beckons.)*
Still am I call'd—unhand me, gentlemen ;—
By Heaven, I'll make a ghost of him that lets (2) me.
(Breaking from them.)

I say away :—Go on—I'll follow thee.

[Exeunt ; Ghost and Hamlet, L.H.—Horatio and Marcellus, slowly follow.]

— SCENE V.—*A remote part of the Platform.*

Re-enter GHOST and HAMLET, from L.H. to R.H.U.E.

Ham. Whither wilt thou lead me ? speak,
I'll go no further.

Ghost. Mark me. "

(1) Remote. (2) Prevents, hinders.

Ham. I will.

Ghost. My hour is almost come,
When I to sulph'rous and tormenting flames
Must render up myself.

Ham. Alas, poor ghost!

Ghost. Pity me not, but lend thy serious hearing
To what I shall unfold.

Ham. Speak, I am bound to hear.

Ghost. So art thou to revenge, when thou shalt hear.

Ham. What?

Ghost. I am thy father's spirit;
Doom'd for a certain term, to walk the night;
And, for the day, confin'd to fast in fires,
Till the foul crimes, done in my days of nature,
Are burnt and purg'd away. But that I am forbid
To tell the secrets of my prison-house,
I could a tale unfold, whose lightest word
Would harrow up thy soul; freeze thy young blood;
Make thy two eyes, like stars, start from their spheres;
Thy knotted and combined locks to part,
And each particular hair to stand on end,
Like quills upon the fretful porcupine:
But this eternal blazon (1) must not be
To ears of flesh and blood:—List, list, O list!—
If thou didst ever thy dear father love,—

Ham. O heaven!

Ghost. Revenge his foul and most unnatural murder.

Ham. Murder!

Ghost. Murder most foul, as in the best it is;
But this most foul, strange, and unnatural.

Ham. Haste me to know it, that I, with wings as
swift

As meditation, or the thoughts of love,
May sweep to my revenge.

Ghost. I find thee apt.—

Now, Hamlet, hear:

'Tis given out, that, sleeping in my orchard,

(1) *This eternal blazon must not be*—this blazon, this exposition, of
the secrets of eternity must not be.

A serpent stung me ; so the whole ear of Denmark
Is by a forged process of my death
Rankly abus'd : but know, thou noble youth,
The serpent, that did sting thy father's life,
Now wears his crown.

Ham. O, my prophetic soul ! my uncle ?

Ghost. Aye, that incestuous, that adulterate beast,
With witchcraft of his wit, with traitorous gifts,
Won to his shameful lust
The will of my most seeming-virtuous queen :
O, Hamlet, what a falling off was there !
From me, whose love was of that dignity,
That it went hand in hand even with the vow
I made to her in marriage ; and to decline (1)
Upon a wretch, whose natural gifts were poor
To those of mine !—

But, soft ! methinks, I scent the morning air,—
Brief let me be :—sleeping within mine orchard,
My custom always of the afternoon,
Upon my secure hour thy uncle stole,
With juice of cursed hebenon in a phial,
And in the porches of mine ears did pour
The leperous distilment : whose effect
Holds such an enmity with blood of man,
That swift as quicksilver, it courses through
The natural gates and alleys of the body ;
So did it mine.

(1) *Decline*—To sink, fall down—This verb is also used by our old dramatists in the sense of *to turn aside*. Examples of each of these uses are abundant.

—“ That spoke, which now is highest
In fortune's wheel, must, when she turns it next,
Decline as low as we are.”—*i. e.*—sink—be abased.

Virgin Martyr, a. 1. s. 1.

“ When men grow fast
Honour'd and loved, there is a trick in state,
Which jealous princes never fail to use,
How to *decline* that growth.”—*i. e.*—*turn aside*.

Sejanus, a. 1. s. 1.

“ Him she loves most, she will seem to hate eagerliest, to *decline*
your jealousy.”

Silent Woman, a. 2. s. 1.

Thus was I, sleeping, by a brother's hand,
Of life, of crown, of queen, at once despatch'd; (1)
Cut off even in the blossoms of my sin,
No reckoning made, but sent to my account
With all my imperfections on my head.

Ham. O, horrible! O, horrible! most horrible!

Ghost. If thou hast nature in thee, bear it not;
Let not the royal bed of Denmark be
A couch for lux'ry and damned incest.
But, howsoever thou pursu'st this act,
Taint not thy mind, nor let thy soul contrive
Against thy mother aught; leave her to heaven,
And to those thorns that in her bosom lodge,
To goad and sting her. Fare thee well at once!
The glow-worm shows the matin to be near,
And 'gins to pale his uneffectual (2) fire.—
Adieu, adieu, adieu! remember me.

(*Ghost vanishes, L.H. trap.*)

Ham. Hold, hold, my heart;
And you, my sinews, grow not instant old,
But bear me stiffly up!—Remember thee?
Aye, thou poor ghost, while memory holds a seat
In this distracted globe. Remember thee?
Yea, from the table of my memory
I'll wipe away all forms, all pressures past,
And thy commandment all alone shall live
Within the book and volume of my brain,
Unmix'd with baser matter; yes, by heaven.
I have sworn it.

Hor. (*Within, R.H.*) My lord, my lord,—

Mar. (*Within.*) Lord Hamlet,—

Hor. (*Within.*) Heaven secure him!

Ham. So be it!

Hor. (*Within.*) Hillo, ho, ho, my lord!

Ham. Hillo, ho, ho, boy! come, bird, come! (3)

(1) *Despatched*—bereft.

(2) *Uneffectual fire*—shining without heat.

(3) *Come, bird, come*—a call used by falconers to their hawk in the air, when they would have him come down.

Enter HORATIO and MARCELLUS, R.H.

Mar. How is't, my noble lord? (*Advances, R.H.*)

Hor. What news, my lord? (*Advances, L.H.*)

Ham. O, wonderful!

Mar. Good, my lord, tell it?

Ham. No; you will reveal it.

Hor. Not I, my lord, by heaven.

Ham. How say you then; would heart of man once think it?—

But you'll be secret?

Hor. Aye, by heaven, my lord.

Ham. There's ne'er a villain, dwelling in all Denmark,

But he's an arrant knave. (*Crosses to R.H.*)

Hor. There needs no ghost, my lord, come from the grave,

To tell us this.

Ham. Why, right; you are in the right;
And so, without more circumstance at all,
I hold it fit; that we shake hands, and part;
You, as your business and desire shall point you;—
For every man hath business and desire,
Such as it is,—and, for my own poor part,
I will go pray.

Hor. These are but wild and whirling words, my lord.

Ham. I am sorry they offend you, heartily.

Hor. There's no offence, my lord.

Ham. Yes, by Saint Patrick, (1) but there is, Horatio,
And much offence too. Touching this vision here,—
It is an honest ghost, that let me tell you:

For your desire to know what is between us,

O'er-master it as you may. And now, good friends,

(*Crosses to L.H.*)

As you are friends, scholars, and soldiers,

Give me one poor request.

(1) This oath is rather improper in the mouth of Hamlet, the Dane; but Shakespeare, as well as his cotemporaries, is seldom nice on these points.

Hor. What is't, my lord?

We will.

Ham. Never make known what you have seen to-night.

Hor. & Mar. My lord, we will not.

Ham. Nay, but swear it.

Hor. Propose the oath, my lord.

Ham. Never to speak of this that you have seen ;
(*Crosses to P.H.*)

Swear by my sword.

Ghost. (Beneath.) Swear!

Hor. O day and night, but this is wond'rous strange!

Ham. And therefore as a stranger give it welcome.

There are more things in heav'n and earth, Horatio,
Than are dreamt of in your philosophy.

But come:—

Here, as before, never, so help you mercy!

How strange or odd soe'er I bear myself,—

As I, perchance, hereafter shall think meet

To put an antic disposition on,—

That you, at such times seeing me, never shall,

With arms encumber'd thus, or this head-shake,

Or by pronouncing of some doubtful phrase,

As, *Well, well, we know:—*or, *We could, an if we would;* or, *If we list to speak;* or, *There be, an if they might;—*

Or such ambiguous giving out, to note

That you know aught of me:—this do ye swear,

So grace and mercy at your most need help you!

Ghost. (Beneath.) Swear!

Ham. Rest, rest, perturbed spirit!—So, gentlemen,
With all my love I do commend me to you:

And what so poor a man as Hamlet is,

May do, to express his love and friending to you,

Heaven willing, shall not lack. Let us go in together:

(*Crosses to L.H.*)

And still your fingers on your lips, I pray.

The time is out of joint;—O cursed spite!

That ever I was born to set it right! [*Exeunt, P.H.*]

ACT II.

SCENE I.—*An Apartment in Polonius's House.**Enter* POLONIUS, L.H. and OPHELIA, R.H.*Pol.* How now, Ophelia? what's the matter?*Oph.* O, my lord, my lord, I have been so affrighted!*Pol.* With what, in the name of heaven?*Oph.* My lord, as I was sewing in my closet,
Lord Hamlet,—with his doublet all unbrac'd,
No hat upon his head,
Pale as his shirt, his knees knocking each other,—
He comes before me.*Pol.* Mad for thy love?*Oph.* My lord, I do not know;
But, truly, I do fear it.*Pol.* What said he?*Oph.* He took me by the wrist, and held me hard;
Then goes he to the length of all his arm,
And with his other hand thus o'er his brow,
He falls to such perusal of my face,
As he would draw it. Long stay'd he so;
At last,—a little shaking of mine arm,
And thrice his head thus waving up and down,—
He rais'd a sigh so piteous and profound,
As it did seem to shatter all his bulk,
And end his being: that done, he lets me go;
And, with his head over his shoulder turn'd,
He seem'd to find his way without his eyes;
For out o'doors he went without their helps,
And, to the last, bended their light on me.*Pol.* Come, go with me; I will go seek the king.
This is the very ecstasy of love.

What, have you given him any hard words of late?

Oph. No, my good lord; but, as you did command,
I did repel his letters, and denied
His access to me.*Pol.* That hath made him mad.
Come, go we to the king:

This must be known ; which, being kept close, might
move
More grief to hide, than hate to utter love.

[*Exeunt*, L.H.]

SCENE II.—*The Palace.*

*Enter the KING, QUEEN, ROSENCRANTZ, GUILDEN-
STERN, L.H. FRANCESCO and BERNARDO, R.H.*

King. Welcome, dear Rosencrantz, and Guilden-
stern !

Moreover that we much did long to see you,
The need, we have to use you, did provoke
Our hasty sending. Something have you heard
Of Hamlet's transformation :
What it should be,
More than his father's death, that thus hath put him
So much from the understanding of himself,
I cannot dream of : I entreat you both,
That you vouchsafe your rest here in our court
Some little time ; so by your companies
To draw him on to pleasures, and to gather,
Whether aught, to us unknown, afflicts him thus,
That, open'd, lies within our remedy.

Queen. Good gentlemen, he hath much talk'd of
you ;

And, sure I am, two men there are not living
To whom he more adheres. If it will please you
So to expend your time with us a while,
Your visitation shall receive such thanks
As fits a king's remembrance.

Ros. Both your majesties
Might, by the sovereign power you have of us,
Put your dread pleasures more into command
Than to entreaty.

Guil. But we both obey ;
And here give up ourselves, in the full bent, (1)

(1) *Bent*---endeavour, application.

To lay our service freely at your feet.

King. Thanks, Rosencrantz, and gentle Guildenstern.

Queen. I do beseech you instantly to visit
My too much changed son.—Go, some of you,
And bring these gentlemen where Hamlet is.

[*Exeunt Rosencrantz, Guildenstern, Francesco,
and Bernardo, R.H.*]

Enter POLONIUS, L.H.

Pol. I now do think (or else this brain of mine
Hunts not the trail of policy so sure
As it hath us'd to do,) that I have found
The very cause of Hamlet's lunacy.

King. O, speak of that; that do I long to hear.

Pol. My liege, and madam, to expostulate (1)
What majesty should be, what duty is,
Why day is day, night, night, and time is time,
Were nothing but to waste night, day, and time.
Therefore,—since brevity is the soul of wit,
And tediousness the limbs and outward flourishes,—
I will be brief: your noble son is mad:
Mad call I it; for, to define true madness,
What is't, but to be nothing else but mad?
But let that go.

Queen. More matter, with less art.

Pol. Madam, I swear, I use no art at all.—
That he is mad, 'tis true; 'tis true, 'tis pity:
And pity 'tis, 'tis true: a foolish figure;
But farewell it; for I will use no art.
Mad let us grant him, then: and now remains,
That we find out the cause of this effect;
Or, rather say, the cause of this defect:
For this effect, defective, comes by cause:
Thus it remains, and the remainder thus.
Perpend,—

I have a daughter; have, while she is mine;

(1) *Expostulate*—to inquire or discuss

Who, in her duty, and obedience, mark,
Hath given me this: (*Shews a paper.*) now gather, and
surmise.

(*Reads.*) *To the celestial, and my soul's idol, the most
beautified Ophelia,—*

That's an ill phrase, a vile phrase; *beautified* is a vile
phrase; but you shall hear:

(*Reads.*) *In her excellent white bosom, these, &c.—*
Queen. Came this from Hamlet to her?

Pol. Good madam, stay a while; I will be faithful;—

(*Reads.*) *Doubt thou, the stars are fire;*

Doubt, that the sun doth move;

Doubt truth to be a liar;

But never doubt, I love.

O dear Ophelia, I am ill at these numbers; I have
no art to reckon my groans; but, that I love thee
best, O most best, believe it. *Adieu.*

*Thine evermore, most dear lady, whilst
this machine is to him, Hamlet.*

This, in obedience, hath my daughter shown me;
And, more above, hath his solicitings,
As they fell out by time, by means, and place,
All given to mine ear.

King. But how hath she
Received his love?

Pol. What do you think of me?

King. As of a man faithful and honourable.

Pol. I would fain prove so. But what might you think,
When I had seen this hot love on the wing,
(As I perceiv'd it, I must tell you that,
Before my daughter told me,) what might you think,
Or my dear majesty your queen here, think,
If I had play'd the desk, or table-book;
Or look'd upon this love with idle sight;
What might you think? No, I went round to work,
And my young mistress thus I did bespeak;
Lord Hamlet is a prince; out of thy sphere;
This must not be: and then I precepts gave her,
That she should lock herself from his resort,
Admit no messengers, receive no tokens;

Which done, she took the fruits of my advice :
 And he, repulsed, (a short tale to make,)
 Fell into a sadness ;
 Thence into a weakness ;
 Thence to a lightness ; and, by this declension,
 Into the madness wherein now he raves,
 And all we mourn for.

King. Do you think, 'tis this ?

Queen. It may be, very likely.

Pol. Hath there been such a time, (I'd fain know that,)

That I have positively said, 'Tis so,
 When it prov'd otherwise ?

King. Not that I know.

Pol. Take this from this, if this be otherwise.

(*Pointing to his head and shoulders.*)

If circumstances lead me, I will find
 Where truth is hid, though it were hid indeed
 Within the centre.

King. How may we try it further ?

Pol. You know, sometimes he walks for hours together

Here in the lobby.

Queen. So he does, indeed.

Pol. At such a time I'll loose my daughter to him ;
 Mark the encounter : if he love her not,
 And be not from his reason fallen thereon,
 Let me be no assistant for a state,
 But keep a farm, and carters. (*Crosses to L.H.*)

King. We will try it.

Queen. But, look, where sadly the poor wretch
 comes reading !

Pol. Away, I do beseech you both ; away !
 I'll board him presently.

[*Exeunt King and Queen, R.H.*]

Enter HAMLET, R.H.U.E. reading.

How does my good lord Hamlet ?

Ham. Excellent well. (*Ham. comes down, L.H.*)

Pol. Do you know me, my lord?

Ham. Excellent well; you are a fishmonger.

Pol. Not I, my lord.

Ham. Then I would you were so honest a man!

Pol. Honest, my lord?

Ham. Aye, sir! to be honest as this world goes, is to be one man picked out of ten thousand.

Pol. That's very true, my lord.

Ham. For, if the sun breed maggots in a dead dog, being a god, kissing carrion—Have you a daughter?

Pol. I have, my lord.

Ham. Let her not walk i' the sun: conception is a blessing; but as your daughter may conceive,—friend, look to't.

Pol. Still harping on my daughter!—yet he knew me not at first; he said, I was a fishmonger. I'll speak to him again. (*Aside.*) What do you read, my lord?

Ham. Words, words, words.

Pol. What is the matter; my lord?

Ham. Between who?

Pol. I mean, the matter that you read, my lord?

Ham. Slanders, sir; for the satirical rogue (1) says here, that old men have grey beards; that their faces are wrinkled; their eyes purging thick amber, and plum-tree gum; and that they have a plentiful lack of wit, together with most weak hams: all of which, sir, though I most powerfully and potently believe, yet I hold it not honesty to have it thus set down; for yourself, sir, shall be as old as I am, if, like a crab, you could go backward.

Pol. Though this be madness, yet there's method in't. (*Aside.*) Will you walk out of the air, my lord?

Ham. Into my grave!

Pol. Indeed, that is out o'the air. How preg-

(1) By the *satirical rogue*, he means *Juvenal*, in his tenth satire, though how Hamlet Prince of Denmark became acquainted with the Roman Satirist, may well be a subject of wonder. Shakespeare thought little of these matters.

Hamlet (1) sometimes his replies are! a happiness that often madness hits on, which reason and sanity could not so prosperously be deliver'd of. I will leave him, and suddenly contrive the means of meeting between him and my daughter. (*Aside*) My honourable lord, I will most humbly take my leave of you.

Ham. You cannot, sir, take from me any thing that I will more willingly part withal, except my life, except my life, except my life. (*Crosses to R.H.*)

Pol. Fare you well, my lord.

Ham. These tedious old fools! (*Aside.*)

Enter ROSENCRANTZ and GUILDENSTERN, L.H.

Pol. You go to seek the lord Hamlet? there he is.

Ros. Heaven save you, sir! [*Exit Polonius, L.H.*]

Guil. My honour'd lord!

Ham. My excellent good friends! How dost thou, Guildenstern? (*Crosses to the centre.*) Ah, Rosen-
crantz! Good lads, how do ye both? What news?

Ros. None, my lord; but that the world's grown honest.

Ham. Then is dooms-day near: but your news is not true. In the beaten way of friendship, what make you at Elsinore?

Ros. To visit you, my lord; no other occasion.

Ham. Beggar that I am, I am even poor in thanks! but I thank you. Were you not sent for? Is it your own inclining? Is it a free visitation? Come, come; deal justly with me; come; nay, speak.

Guil. What should we say, my lord?

Ham. Any thing—but to the purpose. You were sent for; and there is a kind of confession in your looks, which your modesties have not craft enough to

(1) *Pregnant*—Full, complete—Thus, too, Massinger—

“Wilt thou live
Till thou art blasted with the dreadful lightning,
Of pregnant and unanswerable proofs?”

Emperor of the East, a. 4. s. 5.

colour: I know, the good king and queen have sent for you.

Ros. To what end, my lord?

Ham. That you must teach me. But let me conjure you, by the rights of our fellowship, by the consonancy of our youth, by the obligation of our ever-preserved love, and by what more dear a better proposer could charge you withal, be even and direct with me, whether you were sent for, or no?

Ros. What say you? (*Aside to Guildenstern.*)

Ham. Nay, then, I have an eye of you. (*Aside.*) If you love me, hold not off.

Guil. My lord, we were sent for.

Ham. I will tell you why; so shall my anticipation prevent your discovery, and your secrecy to the king and queen moult no feather. I have of late, (but, wherefore, I know not,) lost all my mirth, forgone all custom of exercises; and, indeed, it goes so heavily with my disposition, that this goodly frame, the earth, seems to me a steril promontory; this most excellent canopy, the air, look you, this brave o'er-hanging firmament, this majestical roof fretted with golden fire, why, it appears no other thing to me than a foul and pestilent congregation of vapours. What a piece of work is man! How noble in reason! how infinite in faculties! in form and moving, how express and admirable! in action, how like an angel! in apprehension, how like a god! the beauty of the world! the paragon of animals! And yet, to me, what is this quintessence of dust? Man delights not me,—nor woman neither; though, by your smiling, you seem to say so. (*Crosses to L.H.*)

Ros. My lord, there was no such stuff in my thoughts.

Ham. Why did you laugh then, when I said, *Man delights not me*?

Ros. To think, my lord, if you delight not in man, what lenten entertainment the players shall receive from you; we met them on the way; and hither are they coming, to offer you service.

Ham. (*Crosses to the Centre.*) He that plays the king, shall be welcome; his majesty shall have tribute

of me; the adventurous knight shall use his foil and target; the lover shall not sigh gratis; the humorous man shall end his part in peace; and the lady shall say her mind freely, or the blank verse shall halt for't.—What players are they?

Ros. Even those you were wont to take such delight in, the tragedians of the city.

Ham. How chances it they travel? Their residence, both in reputation and profit, was better both ways. Do they hold the same estimation they did when I was in the city? Are they so followed?

Ros. No, indeed, they are not.

Ham. It is not very strange: for my uncle is king of Denmark; and those, that would make mouths at him while my father liv'd, give twenty, forty, fifty, an hundred ducats a-piece, for his picture in little. There is something in this more than natural, if philosophy could find it out. (*Flourish of Trumpets.*)

Guil. There are the players.

Ham. Gentlemen, you are welcome to Elsinore: your hands; you are welcome;—but my uncle-father and aunt-mother are deceived.

Guil. In what, my dear lord?

Ham. I am but mad north-north-west: when the wind is southerly, I know a hawk from a heronshaw. (1)
(*Crosses to L.H.*)

Pol. (*Within, L.H.*) Well be with you, gentlemen!

Ham. Hark you, Guildenstern, and Rosencrantz,—that great baby, you see there, is not yet out of his swaddling-clouts.

Ros. Happily; he's the second time come to them; ~~for, they say,~~ an old man is twice a child.

Ham. I will prophesy, he comes to tell me of the players; mark it.—You say right, sir; o' Monday morning; 'twas then, indeed—

Enter POLONIUS, L.H.D.

Pol. My lord, I have news to tell you.

(1) The prompt copy reads *hand-saw*—which although it must be an error, is in the reading of the folio.

Ham. My lord, I have news to tell you.
When Roscius was an actor in Rome,—

Pol. The actors are come hither, my lord.

Ham. Buz, buz!

Pol. Upon my honour,—

Ham. Then came each actor on his ass,—

Pol. The best actors in the world, either for tragedy, comedy, history, pastoral, pastoral-comical, historical-pastoral, scene individable, or poem unlimited: Seneca cannot be too heavy, nor Plautus too light. For the law of writ, and the liberty, these are the only men.

Ham. O *Jephthah, Judge of Israel*,—what a treasure hadst thou!

Pol. What a treasure had he, my lord?

Ham. Why—*One fair daughter, and no more,
The which he loved passing well.*

Pol. Still on my daughter.

Ham. Am I not i'the right, old Jephthah?

Pol. If you call me Jephthah, my lord, I have a daughter, that I love passing well.

Ham. Nay, that follows not.

Pol. What follows then, my lord!

Ham. Why, *As by lot, God wot*,—and then, you know, *It came to pass, as most like it was*,—The first row of the pious chanson (1) will show you more; for look, my abridgment comes. (*Crosses to the actors.*)

Enter two ACTORS and an ACTRESS, L.H.D.

You are welcome, masters; welcome, all.—O, old friend! Why, thy face is valanc'd (2) since I saw thee last: Com'st thou to beard me in Denmark?—What my young lady and mistress! By-'r-lady, your ladyship is nearer to heaven than when I saw you last, by

(1) *Pious chanson*—It is *pons chansons* in the first folio edition.—The old ballads sung on bridges, and from thence called *pons chansons*.—A kind of Christmas carols.

(2) Thy face is *valanc'd*—i. e.—thou hast got a beard since I saw thee last.

the altitude of a *chopine*. (1)—You are all welcome. We'll e'en to't like French falconers, fly at any thing we see: we'll have a speech straight:—Come, give us a taste of your quality: come, a passionate speech. (2)

(*The 2d. Actor and Actress retire up the stage.*)

1 *Act.* What speech, my lord?

Ham. I heard thee speak me a speech once,—but it was never acted: or, if it was, not above once: for the play, I remember, pleas'd not the million; 'twas caviare to the general: but it was an excellent play; well digested in the scenes, set down with as much modesty as cunning. (3) • One speech in it I chiefly lov'd: 'twas *Æneas'* tale to Dido; and thereabout of it especially, where he speaks of Priam's slaughter: If it live in your memory, begin at this line;

The rugged Pyrrhus, (4) like the Hyrcanian beast,—
"Tis not so; it begins with Pyrrhus.

*The rugged Pyrrhus,—he, whose sable arms,
Black as his purpose, did the night resemble,
Old grandsire Priam seeks.*

(1) *Chopine*—A clog.

(2) *A passionate speech*—i. e.—a speech of sorrow, of pathos.—Passion and its derivation are frequently used in this sense, or, to speak perhaps more correctly, excess of feeling; thus Massinger.

1. "Oh wife! wife!"

2. "What ails you, man you speak so passionately."—i. e.—sorrowfully. *Great Duke of Florence, a. 1. s. 1.*

—"Tis a play;

Or grant it serious, it at no part merits this passion in you,"—
i. e.—this excess of sorrow. *Roman Actor, a. 3. s. 2.*

(3) *Modesty as cunning*—i. e.—Simplicity as art.

(4) *The rugged Pyrrhus, &c.* We have always avoided encumbering the pages of this edition with long notes, which indeed neither the press of the book nor the patience of our readers would admit of; but we cannot help saying a few words on the skill with which Shakspeare has managed these introduced scenes; they are to be considered, as *Schlegel* properly observes, not by themselves, but in reference to the place in which they appear; the inflated style so different from the play itself gives a wonderful reality to Hamlet; we become at once associated with the Prince, and consider that only to be the fiction, which to him is such; in looking at the false play, we forget the real one; Hamlet is now with us—is amongst us; the same too may be said of all the characters present at the representation of the mock tragedy.

Pol. 'For heaven, (1) my lord, well spoken; with good accent, and good discretion.

Ham. So;—proceed you.

1 Act. *Anon he finds him*

*Striking too short at Greeks; his antique sword,
Rebellious to his arm, lies where it falls,
Repugnant to command; Unequal match'd,
Pyrrhus at Priam drives; in rage, strikes wide;
But with the whiff and wind of his fell sword
The unnerved father falls.*

*But as we often see, against some storm,
A silence in the heavens, the rack (2) stand still,
The bold winds speechless, and the orb below
As hush as death: anon, the dreadful thunder
Doth rend the region: So, after Pyrrhus' pause,
Aroused vengeance sets him new awork
And never did the Cyclops' hammers fall
On Mars' armour, forg'd for proof eterne,
With less remorse than Pyrrhus' bleeding sword
Now falls on Priam.—*

Out, out, thou strumpet, Fortune!

Pol. This is too long.

Ham. It shall to the barber's, with your beard.—
Say on: come to Hecuba.

1 Act. *But who, ah woe! had seen the mobled (3)
queen,—*

Ham. The mobled queen!

Pol. That's good; the mobled queen is good.

1 Act. *Run barefoot up and down, threat'ning the
flames;*

*A clout upon that head,
Where late the diadem stood; and, for a robe,
A blanket, in the alarm of fear caught up:
Who this had seen, with tongue in venom steep'd,
'Gainst fortune's state would treason have pronounc'd?*

(1) 'For heaven'—i. e.—by heaven—The commentators on Shakspeare have written much on this simple phrase, to little purpose; the acute Gifford was the first to set them right.

(2) Rack—i. e.—any thing reeked—vapours—it is here, most probably, used for the general mass of clouds.

(3) Mobled—huddled, grossly covered.

Pol. Look, whether he has-not turn'd his colour, and has tears in's eyes.—Pr'ythee, no more.

Ham. 'Tis well; I'll have thee speak out the rest of this soon. (*1st Actor retires to the R.H. of the Actress.*) 'Good, my lord, will you see the players well bestow'd? (1) Do you hear, let them be well us'd; for they are the abstract, and brief chronicles of the times; after your death you were better have a bad eph, than their ill report while you live.

Pol. My lord, I will use them according to their desert.

Ham. Much better. Use every man after his desert, and who shall 'scape whipping? Use them after your own honour and 'dignity: the less they deserve, the more merit is in your bounty. Take them in.

Pol. Come, sirs. (*Crosses to L.H.*)

Ham. Follow him, friends: we'll hear a play to-morrow. Old friend.— (*To first Actor.*)

[*Exeunt Pol. 2d Actor, and Actress, L.H.D.*]
My good friends, I'll leave you 'till night; you are welcome to Elsinore.

[*Exeunt Rosencrantz and Guildenstern, R.H.*]
Can you play the murder of Gonzago?

1 Act. Aye, my lord.

Ham. We'll have it to-morrow night. You could, for a need, study a speech of some dozen or sixteen lines, which I would set down, and insert in't? could you not?

1 Act. Aye, my lord.

Ham. Very well.—Follow that lord; and look you mock him not.— [*Exit First Actor, L.H.D.*]

I have heard,
That guilty creatures, sitting at a play,
Have by the very cunning of the scene
Beep struck so to the soul, that presently
They have proclaim'd their malefactions:

(1) *Bestowed—Settled—Recoyded—Provided for.*—
Thus, Ben Jonson:

"It is a match; my daughter is *bestow'd*."

Fox, a. 5. s. 8.

For murder, though it have no tongue, will speak
 With most miraculous organ. I'll have these players
 Play something like the murder of my father,
 Before mine uncle : I'll observe his looks ;
 I'll tent (1) him to the quick ; if he do bleach,
 I know my course. The spirit, that I have seen,
 May be a devil : and the devil hath power
 To assume a pleasing shape ; yea, and, perhaps,
 Out of my weakness, and my melancholy,
 As he is very potent with such spirits,
 Abuses me to damn me : I'll have grounds
 More relative than this ; the play's the thing,
 Wherein I'll catch the conscience of the king.

[*Exit*, L.H.]

END OF ACT II.

ACT III.

SCENE I.—*A Hall in the Palace.*

Enter POLONIUS, KING, QUEEN, and OPHELIA, L.H.
 ROSENCRANTZ and GUILDENSTERN, R.H.

King. And can you by no drift of conference
 Get from him, why he puts on this confusion ?

Ros. He does confess he feels himself distracted ;
 But from what cause he will by no means speak.

Guil. Nor do we find him forward to be sounded ;
 But, with a crafty madness, keeps aloof,
 When we would bring him on to some confession
 Of his true state.

Queen. Did you assay him.
 To any pastime ?

Ros. Madam, it so fell out, that certain players
 We o'er-raught (2) on the way : of these we told him ;

(1) To tent—to probe, to search a wound.

(2) O'er-raught—The old irregular past-tense of o'er-reach.

And there did seem in him a kind of joy
 To hear of it; they are about the court;
 And, as I think, they have already order
 This night to play before him.

Pol. 'Tis most true:
 And he beseech'd me to entreat your majesties,
 To hear and see the matter.

King. With all my heart; and it doth much content me

To hear him so inclin'd.
 Good gentlemen, give him a further edge,
 And drive his purpose on to these delights.

Ros. We shall, my lord.

[*Exeunt Rosencrantz and Guildenstern, R.H.*]

King. Sweet Gertrude, leave us too.
 For we have closely (1) sent for Hamlet hither;
 That he, as 'twere by accident, may here
 Affront (2) Ophelia:
 Her father and myself (lawful espials,
 Will so bestow ourselves, that, seeing, unseen,
 We may of their encounter frankly judge;
 And gather by him, as he is behav'd,
 If't be the affliction of his love, or no,
 That thus he suffers for.

Queen. I shall obey you:— (*Crosses to R.H.*)
 And, for your part, Ophelia, I do wish,
 That your good beauties be the happy cause
 Of Hamlet's madness; so shall I hope, your virtues
 Will bring him to his wonted way again,
 To both your honours.

Oph. Madam, I wish it may. [*Exit Queen, R.H.*]

Pol. Ophelia, walk you here:
 Read on this book;
 That show of such an exercise may colour
 Your loneliness. (*Ophelia goes up the stage.*)

I hear him coming; let's withdraw, my lord.

[*Exeunt King and Polonius, R.H.S.E.*]

(1) Closely—i. e.—privately—secretly.—

(2) Affront—i. e.—meet.

Enter HAMLET, L.H.

Ham. To be, or not to be, that is the question :—
 Whether 'tis nobler in the mind, to suffer
 The slings and arrows of outrageous fortune ;
 Or to take arms against a sea of troubles,
 And, by opposing, end them ?—to die ?—to sleep,
 No more ;—and, by a sleep, to say we end
 The heart-ach, and the thousand natural shocks
 That flesh is heir to,—'tis a consummation
 Devoutly to be wish'd. To die :—to sleep :—
 To sleep !—perchance, to dream—Aye, there's the rub ;
 For in that sleep of death what dreams may come,
 When we have shuffled off this mortal coil,
 Must give us pause ; there's the respect, (1)
 That makes calamity of so long life :
 For who would bear the whips and scorns of time,
 The oppressor's wrong, the proud man's contumely,
 The pangs of despis'd love, the law's delay,
 The insolence of office, and the spurns
 That patient merit of the unworthy takes,
 When he himself might his quietus make
 With a bare bodkin ? who would fardels bear,
 To groan and sweat under a weary life ;
 But that the dread of something after death,—
 The undiscover'd country, from whose bourn
 No traveller returns,—puzzles the will,
 And makes us rather bear those ills we have,
 Than fly to others that we know not of ?
 Thus conscience does make cowards of us all ;
 And thus the native hue of resolution
 Is sicklied o'er with the pale cast of thought ;
 And enterprizes of great pith and moment,
 With this regard, their currents turn awry,
 And lose the name of action.—Soft you, now !
(Seeing Ophelia, who advances, R.H.)

(1) *Respect*, here, signifies consideration.

✓ The fair Ophelia :—Nymph, in thy orisons
Be all my sins remember'd !

Oph. Good my lord,
How does your honour for this many a day ?

Ham. I humbly thank you : well.

Oph. My lord, I have remembrances of yours,
That I have longed long to re-deliver ;
I pray you, now receive them.

✓ *Ham.* No, not I ;
I never gave you aught.

Oph. My honour'd lord, you know right well, you
did ;

And, with them, words of so sweet breath compos'd
As made the things more rich : their perfume lost,
Take these again ; for to the noble mind
Rich gifts wax poor, when givers prove unkind.
There, my lord.

Ham. Ha, ha ! are you honest ?

Oph. My lord !

Ham. Are you fair ?

Oph. What means your lordship ?

Ham. That, if you be honest and fair, you should
admit your honesty to no discourse with your beauty.

Oph. Could beauty, my lord, have better commerce
than with honesty ?

Ham. Aye, truly ; for the power of beauty will
sooner transform honesty from what it is to a bawd,
than the force of honesty can translate beauty into his
likeness : this was some time a paradox, but now the
time gives it proof. I did love you once.

Oph. Indeed, my lord, you made me believe so.

• *Ham.* You should not have believed me : for vir-
tue cannot so innoculate our old stock, but we shall re-
lish of it : I lov'd you not.

Oph. I was the more deceived.

• *Ham.* Get thee to a nunnery. Why would'st thou
be a breeder of sinners ? I am myself indifferent honest ;
• but yet I could accuse me of such things, that it were
better my mother had not borne me : I am very proud,

revengeful, ambitious : with more offences at my back, than I have thoughts to put them in, imagination to give them shape, or time to act them in : What should such fellows as I do crawling between earth and heaven ? We are arrant knaves, all : believe none of us ; go thy ways to a nunnery.—Where's your father ?

Oph. At home, my lord.

Ham. Let the doors be shut upon him ; that he may play the fool no where but in's own house. Farewell.

Oph. O, help him, you sweet Heavens !

Ham. If thou dost marry, I'll give thee this plague for thy dowry : Be thou chaste as ice, as pure as snow, thou shalt not escape calumny. Get thee to a nunnery. Or, if thou wilt needs marry, marry a fool ; for wise men know well enough what monsters you make of them. To a nunnery, go.

Oph. Heavenly powers, restore him !

Ham. I have heard of your paintings too, well enough ; Heaven hath given you one face, and you make yourselves another ; you jig, you amble, and you lisp, and nickname heaven's creatures, and make your wantonness your ignorance. (1) Go to ; I'll no more of't ; it hath made me mad. (*Crosses to L.H.*) I say, we will have no more inriages : those that are married already, all but one, shall live ; the rest shall keep as they are. To a nunnery, go. [*Exit, L.H.*]

Oph. O, what a noble mind is here o'ertrown !
The expectancy (2) and rose of the fair state,
The glass of fashion, and the mould of form,
The observ'd of all observers, quite, quite down !
And I, of ladies most deject and wretched,
That suck'd the honey of his music vows,
Now see that noble and most sovereign reason,
Like sweet bells jangled, out of tune and harsh,

(1) *You make your wantonness your ignorance*—i.e.—you want to make your wantonness appear the result of your simplicity, as if you were free in your manners from ignorance of evil.

(2) **Expectancy*—i.e.—the subject of expectation.

O, 'tis you is me!

To have seen what I have seen, see what I see!

[*Exit*, R.H.]

Re-enter KING and POLONIUS, R.H.S.E.

King. Love! his affections do not that way tend;
Nor what he spake, though it lack'd form a little,
Was not like madness. There's something in his soul,
Of which his melancholy sits on brood.
He shall with speed to England,
For the demand of our neglected tribute:
Haply, the seas, and countries different,
With variable objects, shall expel
This something-settled matter in his heart;
Whereon his brain's still beating, puts him thus
From fashion of himself.—What think you on't?

Pol. It shall do well: but yet do I believe,
The origin and commencement of his grief
Sprung from neglected love.
My lord, do as you please;
But, if you hold it fit, after the play,
Let his queen mother all alone entreat him
To show his grief; let her be round with him;
And I'll be plac'd, so please you, in the ear
Of all their conference; if she finds him not,
To England send him; or confine him, where
Your wisdom best shall think.

King. I shall be so:
Madness in great ones must not unwatch'd go.

[*Exeunt*, L.H.]

Enter the first ACTOR and HAMLET, R.H.

Ham. Speak the speech, I pray you, as I pronounced
it to you, trippingly on the tongue; but, if you mouth
it, as many of our players do, I had as lieve the town-
crier spoke my lines. Nor do not saw the air too much
with your hand, thus; but use all gently: for in the
very torrent, tempest, and (as I may say) whirlwind

of your passion, you must acquire and beget a temperance, that may give it smoothness. O, it offends us to the soul, to hear a robustious perriwig-pated fellow tear a passion to tatters, to very rags, to split the ears of the groundlings; who, for the most part, are capable of nothing but inexplicable dumb 'shows, and noise: I would have such a fellow whipped for o'er-doing Termagant; (1) it out-herods Herod: pray you, avoid it.

I Act. I warrant your honour.

Ham. Be not too tame neither, but let your own discretion be your tutor: suit the action to the word, the word to the action; with this special observance, that you o'erstep not the modesty of nature: for any thing so overdone is from the purpose of playing, whose end both at the first, and now, was, and is, to hold, as 'twere, the mirror up to nature; to show virtue her own feature, scorn her own image, and the very age and body of the time, his form and pressure. (2) Now this, over-done, or come tardy off, though it make the unskilful laugh, cannot but make the judicious grieve; the censure of which one, must, in your allowance, o'er-weigh a whole theatre of others. O, there be players that I have seen play,—and heard others praise, and that highly,—not to speak it profanely, that neither having the accent of Christians, nor the gait of Christian, Pagan, or man, have so strutted, and bellowed, that I have thought some of nature's journeymen had made men, and not made them well,—they imitated humanity so abominably.

I Act. I hope we have reformed that indifferently with us.

Ham. O, reform it altogether. And let those, that play your clowns, speak no more than is set down for them: for there be of them, that will themselves laugh, to set on some quantity of barren spectators to laugh

(1) *Termagant*—A Saracen deity, very clamorous and violent in our old moralities.---vide *Gifford's Massinger; Renegade*, a. 1. s. 1.

(2) *Pressure*---impression, thus before---

“I'll wipe away all forms, all pressures past.”---a. 1. s. 5.

Go; though, in the mean time, some necessary question of the play be then to be considered; that's villainous; and shows a most pitiful ambition in the fool that uses it. Go, make you ready.—

Horatio! [Exit 1 Actor, L.H.]

Enter HORATIO, R.H.

Hor. Here, sweet lord, at your service.

Ham. Horatio, thou art e'en as just a man (1)
As e'er my conversation cop'd withal.

Hor. O, my dear lord.—

Ham. Nay, do not think I flatter:
For what advancement may I hope from thee,
That no revenue hast, but thy good spirits,
To feed and clothe thee? Why should the poor be
flattered?

No, let the candied tongue lick absurd pomp,
And crook the pregnant hinges of the knee,
Where thrift may follow fawning. Dost thou hear?
Since my dear soul was mistress of her choice,
And could of men distinguish, her election
She hath seal'd thee for herself: for thou hast been
As one, in suffering all, that suffers nothing;
A man, that fortune's buffets and rewards
Hast ta'en with equal thanks: and bless'd are those,
Whose blood and judgment are so well co-mingled,
That they are, not a pipe for fortune's finger
To sound what stop she please: give me that man
That is not passion's slave, and I will wear him
In my heart's core; ay, in my heart of heart,
As I do thee.—Something too much of this.—
There is a play to-night before the king;
One scene of it comes near the circumstance,
Which I have told thee of my father's death.
I pr'ythee, when thou see'st that act a-foot,
E'en with the very comment of thy soul
Observe my uncle: if his occulted guilt

(1) *As just a man*---As perfect, as complete in all respects.

Do not itself unkennel in one speech,
 It is a damned ghost that we have seen;
 And my imaginations are as foul
 As Vulcan's stithy;(1) give him heedful note:
 For I mine eyes will rivet to his face;
 And, after, we will both our judgments join
 In censure of his seeming.

Hor. Well, my lord.—

Ham. They are coming to the play; I must be idle.
 Get you a place. (*Music.*)

Enter POLONIUS, KING, QUEEN, OPHELIA, ROSEN-
 CRANTZ, GUILDENSTERN, OSRICK, MARCELLUS,
 BERNARDO, FRANCISCO, *Lords & Ladies*, L.H.U.F.

King. How fares our cousin Hamlet?

Ham. Excellent, i'faith; of the camelion's dish: I
 eat the air, promise-cramm'd: you cannot feed cap-
 pons so.

King. I have nothing with this answer, Hamlet;
 these words are not mine.

Ham. No, nor mine now.—My lord, you play'd
 once in the university, you say? (*To Polonius.*)

Pol. That did I, my lord; and was accounted a good
 actor.

Ham. And what did you enact?

Pol. I did enact Julius Cæsar: I was kill'd i'the
 capitol; Brutus kill'd me.

Ham. It was a brute part of him, to kill so capital
 a calf there.—Be'the players ready?

Ros. Aye, my lord; they stay upon your patience.

Queen. Come hither, my dear Hamlet, sit by me.

Ham. No, good mother, here's metal more attrac-
 tive.

Pol. O ho! do you mark that? (*Aside to the King.*)

Ham. Lady, shall I lie in your lap?

Oph. You are merry, my lord.

(*Lying down at Ophelia's feet.*)

(1) *Stithy*---anvil.

Ham. O! your only jig-maker. What should a man do, but be merry? for, look you, how cheerfully my mother looks, and my father died within these two hours.

Oph. Nay, 'tis twice two months, my lord.

Ham. So long? Nay, then let the devil wear black, for I'll have a suit of sables. Die two months ago, and not forgotten yet? Then there's hope, a great man's memory may outlive his life half a year: but by'r-lady, he must build churches then.

Oph. What means the play, my lord?

Ham. Michiug mallecho; (1) it means mischief.

Oph. But what is the argument of the play?

Enter second ACTOR as the Prologue, on a raised stage, L.H.

Ham. We shall know by this fellow.

*2 Act. For us and for our tragedy,
Here stooping to your clemency,
We beg your hearing patiently.*

[Exit, R.H.]

Ham. Is this a prologue, or the posy of a ring?

Oph. 'Tis brief, my lord,

Ham. As woman's love.

Enter first ACTOR and the ACTRESS, L.H. as a Duke and Duchess; on a raised stage. .

*1 Act. Full thirty times hath Phæbus' cart gone
round,
Since love our hearts, and Hymen did our hands,
Unite commutual in most sacred bands.*

*Actress. So many journeys may the sun and moon
Make us again count o'er, ere love be done!*

(1) *Miching mallecho*--A concealed wickedness.

*But, woe is me! you are so sick of late,
So far from cheer, and from your former state,
That I distrust you. Yet, though I distrust,
Discomfort you, my lord, it nothing must;
For women fear too much, even as they love.
Now, what my love is, proof hath made you know;
And as my love is fix'd, my fear is so.*

*Where love is great, the littlest doubts are fear,
Where little fears grow great, great love grows there*

*1 Actor. Faith, I must leave thee love, and shortly
too;*

*My operant powers their functions leave to do:
And thou shalt live in this fair world behind,
Honour'd, belov'd,—and, haply, one as kind
For husband shalt thou—*

Actress. O, confound the rest!

Such love must needs be treason in my breast:

In second husband let me be accurst!

None wed the second, but who kill'd the first.

Ham. That's wormwood. (Aside.)

*1 Actor. I do believe, you think what now you
speak;*

But what we do determine, oft we break.

So think thou wilt no second husband wed;

But die thy thoughts, when thy first lord is dead.

*Actress. Nor earth to me give food, nor heaven
light,*

Sport and repose lock from me, day and night,

Both here, and hence, pursue me lasting strife,

If once a widow, ever I be wife! (Embraces him.)

1 Actor. 'Tis deeply sworn.

Ham. If she should break it now,—

1 Actor. Sweet, leave me here a while;

My spirits grow dull, and fain I would beguile

The tedious day with sleep.

(Crosses to the seat,—he sleeps.)

Actress. Sleep rock thy brain;

And never come mischance between us twain.

[Exit, 1. H.]

Ham. Madam, how like you this play?

Queen. The lady doth protest too much, methinks.

Ham. O, but she'll keep her word.

King. Have you heard the argument? Is there no offence in't?

Ham. No, no, they do but jes', poison in jest; no offence i'the world.

King. What do you call the play?

Ham. The mouse-trap. Marry, how? Tropically.(1)
This play is the image of a murder done in Vienna: Gonzago is the duke's name; his wife, Baptista. You shall see anon, 'tis a knavish piece of work: but what of that? your majesty, and we that have free souls, it touches us not; let the galled jade wince, our withers are unwrung.—

Enter third Actor, as LUCIANUS, L.H.

This is one Lucianus, nephew to the duke.

Oph. You are as good as a chorus, my lord.

Ham. I could interpret between you and your love, if I could see the puppets dallying. Begin, murderer—leave thy damnable faces, and begin. Come: the croaking raven doth bellow for revenge.

3 Actor. *Thoughts black, hands apt, drugs fit,
and time agreeing;*

*Confederate season, 'tise no creature seeing;
Thou mixture rank, of midnight weeds collected,
With Hecat's ban thrice blasted, thrice infected,
Thy natural magic, and dire property,
On wholesome life usurp immediately.*

[Pours the poison into his ear, and Exit, L.H.]

Ham. He poisons him i'the garden for his estate. His name's Gonzago; the story is extant, and written in very choice Italian: you shall see anon, how the murderer gets the love of Gonzago's wife.

King. Give me some light:—away!

Pol. Lights, lights, lights!

[Exeunt all but Hamlet and Horatio, severally.]

(1) *Tropically*—i.e.—by a *Trope*—metaphorically.

Ham. *Why let the stricken deer go weep,
The hart ungalled play:
For some must watch, while some must sleep;
Thus runs the world away.*—

O good Horatio, I'll take the ghost's word for a thousand pound. Didst perceive?

Hor. Very well, my lord.

Hor. Upon the talk of the poisoning,—

Hor. I did very well note him.

Ham. Ah, ha!—Come, some music; come, the recorders. (1) [*Exit Horatio*, R.H.]

Enter GUILDENSTERN and ROSENCRANTZ, L.H.

Guil. Good my lord, vouchsafe me a word with you.

Ham. Sir, a whole history.

Guil. The king, sir,—

Ham. Aye, sir, what of him?

Guil. Is, in his retirement, marvellous distemper'd.

Ham. With drink, sir?

Guil. No, my lord, with choler.

Ham. Your wisdom should show itself more richer, to signify this to the doctor; for, for me to put him to his purgation, would, perhaps, plunge him into more choler.

Guil. Good my lord, put your discourse into some frame, and start not so wildly from my affair.

Ham. I am tame, sir: pronounce.

Guil. The queen, your mother, in most great affliction of spirit, has sent me to you.

Ham. You are welcome.

Guil. Nay, good my lord, this courtesy is not of the right breed. If it shall please you to make me a wholesome answer, I will do your mother's commandment: if not, your pardon, and my return shall be the end of my business.

Ham. Sir, I cannot.

(1) *Recorders*—a kind of flute.

Guil. What, my lord?

Ham. Make you a wholesome answer; my wit's diseas'd: but, sir, such answer as I can make, you shall command: or, rather, as you say, my mother: therefore, no more, but to the matter: my mother, you say—

Ros. Then, thus she says: your behaviour hath struck her into amazement and admiration.

Ham. O wonderful son, that can so astonish a mother!—But is there no sequel at the heels of this mother's admiration?—impart.

Ros. She desires to speak with you, in her closet, ere you go to bed.

Ham. We shall obey, were she ten times our mother.—Have you any further trade with us?

Ros. My lord, you once did love me.

Ham. And do still, by these pickers and stealers.
 (*Crosses to centre.*)

Ros. Good, my lord, what is your cause of distemper? You do surely bar the door upon your own liberty, if you deny your griefs to your friend.

Ham. Sir, I lack advancement.

Ros. How can that be, when you have the voice of the King himself for your succession in Denmark?

Ham. Aye, sir; but, *while the grass grows*,—The proverb is something musty.
 (*Crosses to R.H.*)

*Enter HORATIO and two Musicians, R.H. with
Recorders.*

Ham. O! the recorders,—let me see one.

(*Takes a recorder.*)

To, withdraw with you. (*Guil. crosses behind to R.H.*)

[*Exeunt Horatio and Musicians, R.H.*]

Why do you go about to recover the wind of me, as if you would drive me into a toil?

Guil. O! my lord, if my duty be too bold, my love is too unmannerly.

Ham. I do not well understand that.—Will you play upon this pipe?

Guil. My lord, I cannot.

Ham. I pray you.

Guil. Believe me, I cannot.

Ham. I do beseech you.

Ros. I know no touch of it, my lord.

Ham. 'Tis as easy as lying: govern these ventages with your fingers and thumb, give it breath with your mouth, and it will discourse most eloquent music. Look you, these are the stops.

Guil. But these cannot I command to any utterance of harmony; I have not the skill.

Ham. Why, look you now, how unworthy a thing you make of me! You would play upon me; you would seem to know my stops; you would pluck out the heart of my mystery; you would sound me from my lowest note to the top of my compass: and there is much music, excellent voice, in this little organ; yet cannot you make it speak. 'Sdeath, do you think I am easier to be played on than a pipe? Call me what instrument you will, though you may fret me, you can not play upon me. (Crosses to R.H.)

Enter POLONIUS, R.H.

Pol. My lord, the Queen would speak with you, and presently.

Ham. Do you see yonder cloud, that's almost in shape of a camel?

Pol. By the mass, and 'tis like a camel, indeed.

Ham. Methinks, it is like a weasel.

Pol. It is back'd like a weasel.

Ham. Or, like a whale?

Pol. Very like a whale.

Ham. Then will I come to my mother by-and-bye. —They fool me to the top of my bent.—I will come by-and-bye.

Pol. I will say so.

Ham. By-and-bye is easily said.—[*Exit Polonius*, R.H.D.]—Leave me, friends.

[*Exeunt Rosencrantz and Guildenstern*, R.H.]
'Tis now the very witching time of night;

When church-yards yawn, and hell itself breathes out
Contagion to this world. Now could I drink hot
blood,

And do such business as the bitter (1) day
Would quake to look on. Soft—now to my mother.

O! heart, lose not thy nature; let not ever

The soul of Nero enter this firm bosom:

Let me be cruel—not unnatural:

I will speak daggers to her, but use none.

[*Exit, R.H.D.*

SCENE III.—*A Room in the Palace.*

Enter the KING, ROSENCRANTZ, and GUILDENSTERN,
L.H.

King. I like him not; nor stands it safe with us,
To let his madness range. Therefore, prepare you:
I your commission will forthwith dispatch,
And he to England shall along with you:
Arm you, I pray you, to this speedy voyage;
For we will fetters put upon this fear,
Which now goes too free-footed.

[*Exeunt Rosencrantz & Guildenstern, L.H.*

Enter POLONIUS, R.H.

Pol. My lord, he's going to his mother's closet;
Behind the arras I'll convey myself,
To hear the process; I'll warrant she'll tax him home:
And, as you said, and wisely was it said,
'Tis meet that some more audience, than a mother,
Since nature makes them partial, should o'erhear
The speech of vantage. Fare you well, my liege;
I'll call upon you e'er you go to bed,
And tell you what I know.

King. Thanks, dear my lord.

[*Exeunt; King, R.H. Polonius, L.H.*

(1) A day rendered hateful by the commission of some act of mis-
'chief.

SCENE IV.—*The Queen's Closet.**Enter* QUEEN and POLONIUS, L.H.

Pol. He will come straight. Look, you lay home to him :
 Tell him, his pranks have been too broad to bear with ;
 And that your grace hath screen'd and stood between Much heat and him.—I'll sconce (1) me even here.—
 Pray you be round with him.

Queen. I'll warrant you—
 Fear me not.—Withdraw, I hear him coming.
(Polonius conceals himself behind the arras, L.H.)

Enter HAMLET, R.H.D.

Ham. Now, mother ; what's the matter ?

Queen. Hamlet, thou hast thy father much offended.

Ham. Mother, you have my father much offended.

Queen. Come, come, you answer with an idle tongue.

Ham. Go, go, you question with a wicked tongue.

Queen. Why, how now, Hamlet ?

Ham. What's the matter now ?

Queen. Have you forgot me ? -

Ham. No, by the rood, (2) not so :
 You are the queen, your husband's brother's wife ;
 And—'would it were not so !—you are my mother.

Queen. Nay, then I'll set those to you that can speak.

Ham. Come, come, and sit you down ; you shall not budge ;
 You go not, till I set you up a glass

(1) *Sconce*—i.e.—insconce ; to cover or secure.

(2) *The rood* properly signifies the cross, with the image of our Saviour crucified ; but it is here used, as in many other places, for the cross simply.

Where you may see the inmost part of you.

Queen. What wilt thou do? thou wilt not murder me?

Help, help, ho!

Pol. (Behind.) What, ho! help!

Ham. How now! a rat? (*Draws.*)

Dead, for a ducat, dead.

(Hamlet draws, and makes a pass through the arras.)

Pol. (Behind.) Oh! Oh! Oh!

(Polonius falls and dies, L.H.)

Queen. Oh! me! what hast thou done?

Ham. Nay, I know not—

Is it the king?

Queen. Oh, what a rash and bloody deed is this!

Ham. A bloody deed; almost as bad, good mother,
As kill a king, and marry with his brother.

Queen. As kill a king?

Ham. Aye, lady, 'twas my word—

(Lifts up the arras, and sees Polonius.)

Thou wretched, rash, intruding fool, farewell!

I took thee for thy better. (*To the Queen.*)

Leave wringing of your hand—peace—sit you down,
And let me wring your heart; *(They sit.)* for so I shall,
If it be made of penetrable stuff;

If damned custom have not braz'd it so,

That it be proof and-bulwark against sense.

Queen. What have I done, that thou dar'st wag thy
tongue

In noise so rude against me?

Ham. Such an act,

That biurs the grace and blush of modesty;

Calls virtue, hypocrite; takes off the rose

From the fair forehead of an innocent love,

And sets a blister there; makes marriage vows

As false as dicers' oaths. Oh! such a deed,

As from the body of contraction (1) plucks

The very soul; and sweet religion makes

(1) *Contraction*—contract in marriage.

A rhapsody of words—

Ah me! that act!

Queen. Ah me! what act?

Ham. Look here, upon this picture, and on this;
The counterfeit presentment of two brothers.
See, what a grace was seated on this brow—
Hyperion's curls; the front of Jove himself:(1)
An eye like Mars, to threaten and command;
A station(2) like the herald Mercury,
New-lighted on a heaven-kissing hill;
A combination, and a form, indeed,
Where every god did seem to set his seal,
To give the world assurance of a man:—
This was your husband.—Look you now, what follows:
Here is your husband, like a mildew'd ear,
Blasting his wholesome brother. Have you eyes?
Could you on this fair mountain leave to feed,
And batten on this moor? Ha! have you eyes?
You cannot call it love: for, at your age,
The hey-day in the blood is tame, it's humble,
And waits upon the judgment—and what judgment
Would step from this to this?
O shame! where is thy blush! Rebellious hell,
If thou canst mutine in a matron's bones,
To flaming youth let virtue be as wax,
And melt in her own fire.

Queen. O Hamlet, speak no more;
Thou turn'st mine eyes into my very soul;
And there I see such black and grained(3) spots,
As will not leave their tinct.

Ham. Nay, but to live
In the rank sweat of an enseamed(4) bed—

Queen. No more, sweet Hamlet.

Ham. A murderer, and a villain;
A slave, that is not twentieth part the tythe

(1) Alluding to the description of Phidias's—a famous Grecian Statuary—Jupiter, from Homer.

(2) *Station*—attitude; manner of standing.

(3) *Grained*—i. e.—dyed in grain.

(4) *Enseamed*—greasy; scam is hogslard.

Of your precedent lord—a vice of kings;
 A cutpurse of the empire and the rule;
 That from a shelf a precious diadem stole,
 And put it in his pocket—

Enter GHOST, R.H.D.

A king of shreds and patches:— (*They rise.*)
 Save me, and hover o'er me with your wings,
 You heavenly guards!—What would your gracious
 figure?

Queen. Alas! he's mad.

Ham. Do you not come your tardy son to chide,
 That, laps'd in time and passion, lets go by
 The important acting of your dread command?
 Oh, say!

Ghost. Do not forget—this visitation
 Is but to whet thy almost blunted purpose.
 But, look, amazement on thy mother sits:
 Oh, step between her and her fighting soul.
 Speak to her, Hamlet.

Ham. How is it with you, lady?

Queen. Alas! how is't with you?
 That you do bend your eye on vacancy,
 And with the incorporal air do hold discourse?
 Oh, gentle son,
 Upon the heat and flame of thy distemper
 Sprinkle cool patience. Whereon do you look?

Ham. On him! on him!—Look you, how pale he
 glares!
 His form and cause conjoin'd, preaching to stones,
 Would make them capable.(1)—(*To Ghost.*)—Do not
 look upon me;

Lest, with this piteous action, you convert
 My stern effects; then what I have to do
 Will want true colour; tears, perchance, for blood.

Queen. To whom do you speak this?

Ham. Do you see nothing there?

Queen. Nothing at all ; yet all, that is, I see.

Ham. Nor did you nothing hear ?

Queen. No, nothing but ourselves.

(*Ghost crosses to L.H.*)

Ham. Why, look you there ! look how it steals away !

My father, in his habit as he liv'd !

Look, where he goes, even now, out at the portal !

[*Exit Ghost, L.H.D.*]

Queen. This is the very coinage of your brain :

This bodiless creation ecstasy(1)

Is very cunning in.

Ham. Ecstasy !

My pulse, as yours, doth temperately keep time,
And makes as healthful music : it is not madness
That I have utter'd : bring me to the test,
And I the matter will re-word ; which madness
Would gambol from. Mother, for love of grace,
Lay not that flattering unction to your soul,
That not your trespass, but my madness, speaks ;
It will but skin and film the ulcerous place ;
Whiles rank corruption, mining all within,
Infects unseen. Confess yourself to heaven ;
Repent what's past ;—avoid what is to come.

Queen. Oh Hamlet ! thou hast cleft my heart in twain,

Ham. Oh ! throw away the worse part of it,
And live the purer with the other half.

Good night ; but go not to my uncle's bed ;

Assume a virtue, if you have it not.

Once more, good night !

And when you are desirous to be bless'd,

I'll blessing beg of you.—For this same lord,

I do repent ;

I will bestow him, and will answer well

The death I gave him. So, again, good night !—

[*Exit Queen, R.H.*]

(1) *Ecstasy*---i. e.—Madness.

I must be cruel, only to be kind :
Thus bad begins, and worse remains behind.

[*Exit*, L.H.D.]

END OF ACT III.

ACT IV.

SCENE I.—*An Apartment in the Palace.*

Enter KING and QUEEN, L.H.

King. There's matter in these sighs, these profound
heaves,
You must translate ; 'tis fit we understand them ;
How does Hamlet ?

Queen. Mad as the sea and wind when both con-
tend

Which is the mightier—In his lawless fit,
Behind the arras hearing something stir,
Whips out his rapier, cries "*A rat ! a rat !*"
And, in this brainish apprehension, kills
The unseen good old man.

King. Oh, heavy deed !
It had been so with us had we been there.
Where is he gone ?

Queen. To draw apart the body he hath kill'd.

King. The sun no sooner shall the mountains touch,
But we will ship him hence ; and this vile deed
We must with all our majesty and skill,
Both countenance and excuse.—Ho ! Guildenstern !

Enter ROSENCRANTZ and GUILDENSTERN, L.H.

Friends both, go join you with some further aid ;
Hamlet in madness hath Polonius slain,
And from his mother's closet hath he dragg'd him ;
Go seek him out ; speak fair, and bring the body

Into the chapel. I pray you, haste in this.

[*Exeunt Rosencrantz and Guildenstern, L.H.*]

Come, Gertrude, we'll call up our wisest friends,
And let them know both what we mean to do,
And what's untimely done. (*Crosses to R.H.*)

[*Exeunt, R.H.*]

SCENE II.—*Another Room in the Palace.*

Enter HAMLET, L.H.

Ham. ——— Safely stow'd,—

Ros. (*Within, R.H.*) Hamlet! Lord Hamlet!

Ham. What noise? who calls on Hamlet? O, here they come.

Enter ROSENCRANTZ and GUILDENSTERN, R.H.

Ros. What have you done, my lord, with the dead body?

Ham. Compounded it with dust, whereto 'tis kin.

Ros. Tell us where 'tis; that we may take it thence, and bear it to the chapel.

Ham. Do not believe it.

Ros. Believe what?

Ham. That I can keep your counsel, and not mine own. Besides, to be demanded of a sponge!—what replication should be made by the son of a king.

Ros. Take you me for a sponge, my lord?

Ham. Aye, sir; that soaks up the king's countenance, his rewards, his authorities. But such officers do the king best service in the end; he keeps them, like an ape, in the corner of his jaw; first mouthed, to be last swallowed:—when he needs what you have gleaned, it is but squeezing you, and, sponge, you shall be dry again.

Ros. I understand you not, my lord.

Ham. I am glad of it:—a knavish speech sleeps in a foolish ear.

Ros. My lord, you must tell us where the body is, and go with us to the king.

Ham. Bring me to him.

[*Exeunt*, R.H.D.]

SCENE III.—*An Apartment in the Palace.*

Enter the KING, L.H. attended.

King. How dangerous is it that this man goes loose !
Yet must not we put the strong law on him ;
He's lov'd of the distracted multitude,
Who like not in their judgment, but their eyes ;
And, where 'tis so, the offender's scourge is weigh'd,
But never the offence.

Enter ROSENCRANTZ, R.H.D.

How now ? what hath befallen ?

Ros. Where the dead body is bestow'd, my lord,
We cannot get from him ?

King. But where is he ?

Ros. Without, my lord, guarded, to know your
pleasure.

King. Bring him before us.

Ros. Ho, Guildenstern ! bring in my lord.

Enter GUILDENSTERN and HAMLET, R.H.D.

King. Now, Hamlet, where's Polonius ?

Ham. At supper.

King. At supper ? where ?

Ham. Not where he eats, but where he is eaten ; a
certain convocation of politic worms are e'en at
him.

King. Where is Polonius ?

Ham. In heaven ; send thither to see ; if your mes-
senger find him not there, seek him in the other place
yourself.—But, indeed, if you find him not within this

HAMLET.

month, you shall nose him as you go up the stairs into the lobby.

King. Go, seek him there.

Ham. He will stay till you come.

[*Exit Guildenstern, R.H.D.*]

King. Hamlet, this deed, for thine especial safety,
Must send thee hence ;

Therefore prepare thyself :—

The bark is ready, and the wind at help,

For England.

Ham. For England !

King. Aye, Hamlet.

Ham. Good.

King. So is it, if thou knewst our purposes.

Ham. I see a cherub, that sees them.—But, come ;
for England !—Farewell, dear mother.

King. Thy loving father, Hamlet.

Ham. My mother :—Father and mother is man and
wife ; man and wife is one flesh ; and so, my mother.

Come, for England. [*Exit, R.H.D.*]

King. Follow him at foot, (1) tempt him with
speed aboard ;

Away ; for every thing is seal'd and done,—

[*Exit Rosencrantz, R.H.D.*]

And England, if my love thou holdst at aught,

Let it be testified in Hamlet's death. [*Exit, L.H.*]

SCENE IV.—*Another Room in the Palace.*

Enter the QUEEN and HORATIO, L.H.D.

Queen. I will not speak with her.

Hor. She is importunate : indeed, distract :
Twere good she were spoken with ; for she may strew
Dangerous conjectures in ill-breeding minds.

Queen. Let her come in. [*Exit Horatio, L.H.*]

Oph. (*Without, L.H.*) Where is the beauteous ma-
jesty of Denmark ?

(1) *At foot*—i. e.—At his heels, closely.

Queen. How now, Ophelia? (Crosses to R.H.)

Re-enter HORATIO with OPHELIA, L.H.

Oph. (Sings.) *How should I your true love know
From another one?*

*By his cockle hat and staff,
And his sandal shoon.*

Queen. Alas! sweet lady, what imports this song?

Oph. Say you? nay, pray you mark.
(Sings.) *He is dead and gone, lady,
He is dead and gone;
At his head a grass-green turf,
At his heels a stone.*

Enter the KING, R.H.

Queen. Nay, but, Ophelia,—

Oph. Pray you, mark,

(Sings.) *White his shroud as the mountain snow,
Larded all with sweet flowers:
Which bewept to the grave did go,
With true-love showers.*

(Crosses to the King.)

King. How do you, pretty lady?

Oph. Well, heaven 'ield (1) you! They say, the owl was a baker's daughter. (2) We know what we are, but know not what we may be.

King. Canst thou cit upon her father.

Oph. Pray, let's have no words of this: but when they ask you, what it means, say this,—

(Sings.) *Good morrow, 'tis Saint Valentine's day,
All in the morning betime,
And I a maid at your window,
To be your Valentine.*

(1) *Heaven 'ield*—i. e. heaven reward.

(2) Alluding to a legendary story, wherein our Saviour being refused bread by the daughter of a baker, is described as punishing her of charity by turning her into an owl.

King. Pretty Ophelia!

Oph. Indeed, without an oath, I'll make an end on't.

(Sings.) *Then up he rose, and donn'd his clothes,*

And dupp'd (1) the chamber door;

Let in the maid, that out a maid

Never departed more.

(Crosses to R.H.)

King. How long hath she been thus?

Oph. I hope, all will be well. We must be patient: but I cannot choose but weep, to think, they should lay him i'the cold ground: my brother shall know of it, and so I thank you for your good counsel. Come, my coach! Good night, ladies; good night, sweet ladies; good night, good night. [Exit, R.H.]

King. Follow her close: give her good watch, I pray you. [Exit Horatio, R.H.]

O! this is the poison of deep grief; it springs
All from her father's death. (A noise without, L.H.)

Enter MARCELLUS, L.H.

What's the matter?

Mar. Save yourself, my lord;
The young Laertes, in a riotous head,
O'erbears your officers: the rabble call him, lord;
They cry, *Choose we, Laertes shall be king!*
Caps, hands, and tongues, applaud it to the clouds,
Laertes shall be king! Laertes king!

(A noise without, L.H.)

Lacr. (Without, L.H.) Where is this king?—Sirs,
stand you all without.—

Enter LAERTES, L.H.

O thou vile king!—

Give me my father. [Exit Marcellus, L.H.]

Queen. Calmly, good Laertes.

(1) *Dupp'd*—i. e.—To do up; to lift the latch.

Laer. That drop of blood, that's calm, proclaims me
bastard ;

Cries cuckold, to my father ; brands the harlot
Even here, between the chaste unsmirched (1) brow
Of my true mother.

King. What is the cause, Laertes,
That thy rebellion looks so giant-like ?—
Let him go, Gertrude ; do not fear our person ;
There's such divinity doth hedge a king,
That treason can but peep to what it would.
Let him go, Gertrude.

Laer. Where's my father ?

King. Dead.

Queen. But not by him.

King. Let him demand his fill.

Laer. How came he dead ? I'll not be juggled with :
To hell, allegiance !
To this point I stand,—
That both the worlds I give to negligence,
Let come what comes ; only I'll be reveng'd,
Most thoroughly for my father.

King. Who shall stay you ?

Laer. My will, not all the world's : (2)
And, for means, I'll husband them so well,
They shall go far with little.

King. Good Laertes,
That I am guiltless of your father's death,
And am most sensibly in grief for it,
It shall as level to your judgment 'pear,
As day does to your eye.

Hor. (*With ext.* R.H.) Oh, poor Ophelia !

King. Let her come in.

*Enter OPHELIA, R.H. fantastically dressed with
Straws and Flowers.*

Laer. O rose of May !— (*Crosses to her.*)

(1) *Unsmirched*—unstained ; unsoiled.

(2) *My will, not all the world's, &c.*—Perhaps it should be read
thus—My will, not all the world, &c.—i. e.—*By my will* ; as far as
my will is concerned, not all the world shall stop me ; and as for my
means, I'll husband them so well, they shall go far, though really little.

Dear maid, kind sister, sweet Ophelia!—
O heavens! is it possible, a young maid's wits
Should be as mortal as an old man's life?

Oph. (Sings.)

*They bore him bare-fac'd on the bier;
And in his grave rain'd many a tear;—*

Fare you well, my dove!

Laer. Hadst thou thy wits, and didst persuade re-
venge,

It could not move thus.

Oph. You must sing: (*Sings.*)

Down a-down, an you call him a-down-a.

O, how the wheel (1) becomes it! It is the false stew-
ard, that stole his master's daughter.

Laer. This nothing's more than matter.

Oph. (To Laer.) There's rosemary, that's for re-
membrance; pray you, love, remember; and there is
pansies, that's for thoughts.

Laer. A document in madness; thoughts and re-
membrance fitted.

Oph. There's fennel for you, and columbines. (*To
the King.*) There's rue for you. (*To the Queen.*)—
and here's some for me:—we may call it herb of grace
o'Sundays—you may wear your rue with a differ-
ence.—There's a daisy: I would give you some violets,
but they withered all when my father died.—They say
he made a good end.—(*Sings.*)—*For bonny sweet
Robin is all my joy.*

Laer. Thought (2) and affliction, passion, hell itself,
She turns to favour, and to prettiness.

Oph. (Sings.) And will he not come again?

And will he not come again?

No, no, he is dead,

Go to thy death-bed,

He never will come again.

His beard was as white as snow,

All flaxen was his pole:

(1) *Wheel*—i. e.—Burthen of the song.

(2) *Thought*, here, means melancholy.

*He is gone, he is gone,
And we cast away moan;
And peace be with his soul!*

And with all christian souls! I pray heaven.

•[*Exeunt Ophelia and Queen, L.H.*

King. Laertes, I must commune with your grief,
Or you deny me right. Go but apart,
Make choice of whom your wisest friends you will,
And they shall hear and judge 'twixt you and me:
If by direct or by collateral hand
They find us touch'd, we will our kingdom give,
Our crown, our life, and all that we call ours,
To you in satisfaction; but, if not,
Be you content to lend your patience to us,
And we shall jointly labour with your soul
To give it due content.

Laer. Let this be so;
His means of death, his obscure funeral,—
No trophy, sword, or hatchment, o'er his bones,
No noble right, nor formal ostentation,—
Cry, to be heard, as 'twere, from heaven to earth,
That I must call't in question.

King. So you shall;
And, where the offence is, let the great axe fall.

[*Exeunt, R.H.*

SCENE V.—*An Apartment in the Palace.*

Enter HORATIO and FRANCISCO, R.H.

Hor. What are they, that would speak with me?

Fran. Sailors, sir:

They say, they have letters for you.

Hor. Let them come in,— (*Crosses behind.*)

[*Exit Francisco, L.H.*

I do not know from what part of the world
I should be greeted, if not from Lord Hamlet.

Enter two SAILORS, L.H.

1 *Sail.* Heaven bless you, sir.

Hor. Let him bless thee too.

1 *Sail.* He shall, sir, an't please him. There's a letter for you, sir—it comes from the ambassador that was bound for England—if your name be Horatio, as I am let to know it is.

Hor. (Reads the letter.)—"Horatio, when thou shalt have overlook'd this, give these fellows some means (1) to the king; they have letters for him. Rosencrantz and Guildenstern hold their course for England; of them I have much to tell thee.—A pirate of very warlike appointment gave us chase. Finding ourselves too slow of sail, we put on a compelled valour, and in the grapple I boarded them: on the instant, they got clear of our ship; so I alone became their prisoner. They have dealt with me, like thieves of mercy; but they knew what they did; I am to do a good turn for them. Let the king have the letters I have sent; and repair thou to me with as much haste as thou wouldst fly death. These good fellows will bring thee where I am. Farewell.

He that thou knowest thine,

Hamlet."

Come, I will give you way for these your letters;

(Crosses to L.H.)

And do't the speedier, that you may direct me

To him from whom you brought them. [*Exeunt, L.H.*

SCENE VI.—*Another Room in the Palace.*

Enter the KING and LAERTES, R.H.

King. Now must your conscience my acquittance seal;

(1) *Means to the king*—i. e.,—Some means of access to the king.

Sith you have heard, and with a knowing ear,
That he, which hath your noble father slain,
Pursued my life.

Laer. And so have I a noble father lost :
A sister driven into desperate terms ;
Whose worth
Stood challenger on mount of all the age
For her perfections : but my revenge will come.

King. Break not your sleeps for that : you must
not think,
That we are made of stuff so flat and dull,
That we can let our beard be shook with danger,
And think it pastime. You shortly shall hear more.—
How now ? what news ?

Enter BERNARDO, L.H.

Ber. Letters, my lord, from Hamlet :
This to your majesty ; this to the queen.

King. From Hamlet ! Who brought them ?

Ber. Sailors, my lord, they say ; I saw them not.

King. Laertes, you shall hear them. (*To Ber.*)
Leave us. [*Bernardo crosses behind, and exit, R.H.*
(*Reads.*) “ *High and mighty, you shall know, I am
set naked on your kingdom. To-morrow shall I beg
leave to see your kingly eyes : when I shall, first
asking your pardon thereunto, recount the occasion
of my sudden and more strange return.*”

“ *Hamlet.*”

What should this mean ? Are all the rest come back ?
Or is it some abuse, and no such thing ?

Laer. Know you the hand ?

King. 'Tis Hamlet's character.—*Naked,*—
And, in a postscript here, he says *alone.*

Can you advise me ?

Laer. I am lost in it, my lord. But let him come ;
It warms the very sickness in my heart,
That I shall live and tell him to his teeth,
Thus diddest thou.

King. If it be so, Laertes,
Will you be rul'd by me?

Laer. Aye, my lord;
So you will not o'er-rule me to a peace.

King. To thine own peace. If he be now return'd,—
As checking at his voyage, and that he means
No more to undertake it,—I will work him
To an exploit, now ripe in my device,
Under the which he shall not choose but fall:
And for his death no wind of blame shall breathe;
But even his mother shall uncharge the practice, (1)
And call it, accident.

Laer. My lord, I will be rul'd;
The rather, if you could devise it so,
That I might be the organ.

King. It falls right.
You have been talk'd of since your travel much,
And that in Hamlet's hearing, for a quality
Wherein, they say, you shine.

Laer. What part is that, my lord?

King. A very ribband in the cap of youth.
Here was a gentleman of Normandy,—
He made confession of you;
And gave you such a masterly report,
For art and exercise in your defence,
And for your rapier most especial,
That he cried out, 'twould be a sight indeed,
If one could match you:
This report of his
Did Hamlet so envenom with his envy,
That he could nothing do, but wish and beg
Your sudden coming o'er, to play with you.
Now, out of this,—

Laer. What out of this, my lord?

King. Laertes, was your father dear to you?
Or, are you like the painting of a sorrow,
A face without a heart?

(1) *Uncharge the practice*—acquit us of the practice.

Laer. Why ask you this?

King. Hamlet comes back: what would you undertake,

To show yourself in deed your father's son
More than in words?

Laer. To cut his throat i'the church.

King. No place, indeed, should murder sanctuarize.

Hamlet, return'd, shall know you are come home:
We'll put on those shall praise your excellence,
And set a double varnish on the fame
The Frenchman gave you; bring you, in fine, together,

And wager o'er your heads: he, being remiss,
Most generous, and free from all contriving,
Will not peruse (1) the foils; so, that with ease,
Or, with a little shuffling, you may choose
A sword unbated (2), and, in a pass of practice,
Requite him for your father.

Laer. I will do't:

And, for the purpose, I'll anoint my sword.—
I bought an unction of a mountebank,
So mortal, that, but dip a knife in it,
Where it draws blood, no cataplasm so rare,
Collected from all simples that have virtue
Under the moon, can save the thing from death,
That is but scratch'd withal: I'll touch my point
With this contagion; that, if I gall him slightly,
It may be death.

King. Let's further think of this;—
We'll make a solemn wager on your cunnings,
When in your motion you are hot and dry,
(As make your bouts more violent to that end,)
And that he calls for drink, I'll have preferr'd
him

(1) *Peruse*—Consider; the word is not unfrequently used in this acceptation.

(2) *Sword unbated*—i.e.—not blunted as foils are.

A chalice for the nonce ; (1) whereon but sipping,
If he by chance escape your venom'd stuck,
Our purpose may hold there. But stay, what noise ?

Enter the QUEEN, L.H.

Queen. One woe doth tread upon another's heel,
So fast they follow :—your sister's drown'd, Laertes.

Laer. Drown'd ! O, where ?

Queen. There is a willow grows ascaunt the brook,
That shows his hoar leaves in the glassy stream :
Therewith fantastic garlands did she make
Of crow-flowers, nettles, daisies, and long purples ;
There on the pendant boughs her coronet weeds
Clambering to hang, an envious sliver broke :
When down her weedy trophies, and herself,
Fell in the weeping brook.

Laer. I forbid my tears :—but yet
It is our trick ; nature her custom holds,
Let shame say what it will :—
Adieu, my lord ! (*Crosses to R.H.*)
I have a speech of fire, that fain would blaze,
But that this folly drowns it. [*Exeunt, R.H.*]

END OF ACT IV.

(1) *For the nonce*---This is sometimes written *for the nones*, and it always means *for the once*, for the present purpose, for the immediate subject of question. The progress of the word may be thus traced : *a ones, an ones, for the ones, for the nanes, for nones, for the nonce.**

“ Would you live free from all diseases ?
Do the act your mistress pleases ;
Yea, fright all aches from your bones ?
Here's a med'cine for the *nones*.” *Fox, a. 2. s. 1.*

“ I have cases of buckram for the *nonce*,
To enmask our outward noted garments.”
First Part of King Henry the Fourth, a. 4. s. 3.

* In the first edition, it should have been stated that the substance of this note was borrowed from *Gifford's Ben Jonson*.

ACT V.

SCENE I.—*A Church-yard.*

Enter two GRAVE-DIGGERS, L.H.S.E.

1 *G. D.* (R.H.) Is she to be buried in christian burial, that wilfully seeks her own salvation?

2 *G. D.* I tell thee, she is; therefore, make her grave straight: the crowner hath set on her, and finds it christian burial.

1 *G. D.* How can that be, unless she drowned herself in her own defence?

2 *G. D.* Why, 'tis found so.

1 *G. D.* It must be *se offendendo*; it cannot be else. For here lies the point: If I drown myself wittingly, it argues an act; and an act hath three branches; it is, to act, to do, and to perform. Argal, she drowned herself wittingly.

2 *G. D.* Nay, but hear you, goodman delver.

1 *G. D.* Give me leave. (*Crosses to L.H.*) Here lies the water; good: (*Crosses to R.H.*) here stands the man; good. If the man go to this water, and drown himself, it is, will he, nill he, he goes: mark you that: but, if the water come to him, and drown him, he drowns not himself. Argal, he that is not guilty of his own death, shortens not his own life.

2 *G. D.* But is this law?

1 *G. D.* Ayé, marry is't, crowner's-quest law.

2 *G. D.* Will you ha' the truth on't? If this had not been a gentlewoman, she should have been buried out of christian burial.

1 *G. D.* Why, there thou say'st; and the more pity, that great folks should have countenance in this world to drown or hang themselves, more than their even Christian. Come, my spade. There is no ancient gentlemen but gardeners, ditchers, and grave-makers; they hold up Adam's profession.

2 *G. D.* Was he a gentleman?

1 *G. D.* He was the first that ever bore arms. I'll put a question to thee: if thou answerest me not to the purpose, confess thyself.—

2 *G. D.* Go to.

1 *G. D.* What is he that builds stronger than either the mason, the shipwright, or the carpenter?

2 *G. D.* The gallows-maker; for that frame out-lives a thousand tenants.

1 *G. D.* I like thy wit well, in good faith; the gallows does well. But how does it well? it does well to those that do ill: now thou dost ill, to say, the gallows is built stronger than the church. Argal, the gallows may do well to thee. To't again; come.

2 *G. D.* Who builds stronger than a mason, a shipwright, or a carpenter?

1 *G. D.* Aye, tell me that, and unyoke.

2 *G. D.* Marry, now I can tell.

1 *G. D.* To't.

2 *G. D.* Mass, I cannot tell.

Enter HAMLET and HORATIO, L.H.U.E.—They cross behind to R.H.

1 *G. D.* Cudgel thy brains no more about it; for your dull ass will not mend his pace with beating: and, when you are asked this question next, say, a grave-maker; the houses that he makes, last till doomsday. Go, get thee to Yaughan, and fetch me a stoup of liquor. [*Exit Second Grave-digger, L.H.*]

(The Grave-digger digs and sings.)

*In youth, when I did love, did love,
Methought it was very sweet,
To contract, O, the time, for, ah, my behove,
O, methought there was nothing meet.*

Ham. Has this fellow no feeling of his business? he sings at grave-making.

Hor. Custom hath made it in him a property of easiness.

Ham. 'Tis e'en so: the hand of little employment hath the daintier sense.

(*Grave-digger sings.*)

*But age, with his stealing steps,
Hath claw'd me in his clutch,
And hath shipp'd me into the land,
As if I had never been such.*

(*Throws up a skull.*)

Ham. That skull had a tongue in it, and could sing once. How the knave jowls it to the ground, as if it were Cain's jaw-bone, that did the first murder! This might be the pate of a politician, which this ass now o'er-reaches; one that would circumvent heaven; might it not? (*The Grave-digger throws up bones.*)

Hor. It might, my lord.

Ham. Did these bones cost no more the breeding, but to play at loggats with them? Mine ache to think on't.

(*Grave-digger sings.*)

*A pick-axe and a spade, a spade,
For—and a shrouding sheet:
O, a pit of clay for to be made
For such a guest is meet.*

(*Throws up another skull.*)

Ham. There's another. Why may not that be the skull of a lawyer? Where be his quiddits now, his quillets, his cases, his tenures, and his tricks? Why does he suffer this rude knave now to knock him about the sconce with a dirty shovel, and will not tell him of his action of battery? I will speak to this fellow.—Whose grave's this, sirrah? (*Advances, R.H.*)

G. D. Mine, sir.

(Sings.) *O, a pit of clay for to be made
For such a guest is meet.*

Ham. I think it be thine, indeed ; for thou liest in it.

1 *G. D.* You lie out on't, sir, and therefore, it is not yours ; for my part, I do not lie in't, yet it is mine.

Ham. Thou dost lie in't, to be in't, and say it is thine ; 'tis for the dead, not for the quick ; therefore thou liest.

1 *G. D.* 'Tis a quick lie, sir ; 'twill away again from me to you.

Ham. What man dost thou dig it for ?

1 *G. D.* For no man, sir.

Ham. What woman then ?

1 *G. D.* For none neither.

Ham. Who is to be buried in't ?

1 *G. D.* One that was a woman, sir ; but, rest her soul ! she's dead.

Ham. How absolute the knave is ! We must speak by the card, or equivocation will undo us.—How long hast thou been a grave-maker ?

1 *G. D.* Of all the days i'the year, I came to't that day that our last king Hamlet overcame Fortinbras.

Ham. How long is that since ?

1 *G. D.* Cannot you tell that ? every fool can tell that : it was that very day that young Hamlet was born ; he that is mad, and sent into England ?

Ham. Aye, marry, why was he sent into England ?

1 *G. D.* Why, because he was mad. He shall recover his wits there ; or, if he do not, 'tis no great matter there.

Ham. Why ?

1 *G. D.* 'Twill not be seen in him there ; there the men are as mad as he.

Ham. How came he mad ?

1 *G. D.* Very strangely, they say.

Ham. How strangely ?

1 *G. D.* 'Faith, e'en with losihg his wits.

Ham. Upon what ground ?

I *G. D.* Why, here in Denmark. I have been sexton here, man and boy, thirty years.

Ham. How long will a man lie i'the earth ere he rot?

I *G. D.* 'Faith, if he be not rotten before he die, he will last you some eight year, or nine year: a tanner will last you nine year.

Ham. Why he more than another?

I *G. D.* Why, sir, his hide is so tanned with his trade, that he will keep out water a great while; and your water is a sore decayer of your whoreson dead body. Here's a skull now hath lain you i'the earth three-and-twenty years.

Ham. Whose was it?

I *G. D.* A whoreson mad fellow's it was. Whose do you think it was?

Ham. Nay, I know not.

I *G. D.* A pestilence on him for a mad rogue! He poured a flaggon of Rhenish on my head once! This same skull, sir, was Yorick's skull, the king's jester.

Ham. This? (*Taking the skull.*)

I *G. D.* E'en that.

Ham. Alas! poor Yorick!—I knew him, Horatio; a fellow of infinite jest, of most excellent fancy. He hath borne me on his back a thousand times. Here hung those lips that I have kissed I know not how oft. Where be your gibes now? your gambols? your songs? your flashes of merriment, that were wont to set the table in a roar? Not one now, to mock your own grinning? quite chap-fallen? Now get you to my lady's chamber, and tell her, let her paint an inch thick, to this favour (1) she must come: make her laugh at that.—

Pr'ythee, Horatio, tell me one thing.

Hor. What's that; my lord?

Ham. Dost thou think that Alexander looked o'this fashion i'the earth?

Hor. E'en so.

(1) *Favour*—complexion; appearance.

Ham. And smelt so? pah! (*Puts down the scull.*)

Hor. E'en so, my lord.

Ham. To what base uses we may return, Horatio! Why may not imagination trace the noble dust of Alexander, till he find it stopping a bung-hole?

Hor. 'Twere to consider too curiously, to consider so.

Ham. No, 'faith, not a jot; but to follow him thither with modesty enough, and likelihood to lead it: As thus, Alexander died, Alexander was buried, Alexander returneth to dust; the dust is earth; of earth we make loam: and why of that loam, whereto he was converted might they not stop a beer-barrel?

Imperious Cæsar, dead and turn'd to clay,

Might stop a hole to keep the wind away:

Oh, that the earth, which kept the world in awe,

Should patch a wall, t' expel the winter's flaw!

(*A bell tolls.*)

But, soft! but soft! aside;—here comes the king,
The queen, the courtiers.—Who is this they follow?

And with such maim'd rites! This doth betoken,

The corse they follow did, with desperate hand,

Foredo its own life. 'Twas of some estate:

Couch we awhile, and mark.

(*Retires with Horatio, R.H.—Bell tolls.*)

*Enter KING, QUEEN, LAERTES, Lords, Ladies, Priests,
&c. through the gates, attending the corpse of
OPHELIA, L.H.U.E.—(Bell tolls.)*

Laer. What ceremony else?

Ham. That is Laertes,

A very noble youth.

(*Aside to Hor.*)

Priest. Her obsequies have been as far enlarg'd

As we have warranty. Her death was doubtful;

And, but that great command o'ersways the order,

She should in ground unsanctifi'd have lodg'd

Till the last trumpet; for charitable prayers,

Shards, flints, and pebbles, should be thrown on her;

Yet here she is allow'd her virgin crants, (1)
Her maiden strewments, and the bringing home
Of bell and burial. (2)

Laer. Must there no more be done?

Priest. No more be done?

We should profane the service of the dead,
To sing a *requiem*, and such rest to her
As to peace-parted souls.

Laer. Lay her i'the earth;—
And from her fair and unpolluted flesh
May violets spring!—I tell thee, churlish priest,
A minist'ring angel shall my sister be,
When thou liest howling.

Ham. What, the fair Ophelia!

Queen. Sweets to the sweet: farewell!

(*Takes a basket from a Lady, and scatters
flowers.*)

I hop'd thou shouldst have been my Hamlet's wife:
I thought thy bride-bed to have deck'd, sweet maid,
And not have strew'd thy grave.

Laer. O, treble woe
Fall ten times treble on that cursed head,
Whose wicked deed thy most ingenious sense
Depriv'd thee of!—Hold off the earth awhile,
Till I have caught her once more in mine arms:
(*Leaps into the grave.*)

Now pile your dust upon the quick and dead,
To o'ertop old Pelion, or the skyish head
Of blue Olympus. [*Exit Grave-digger, L.H.U.E.*]

Ham. (*Advancing.*) What is he whose grief
Bears such an emphasis? Whose phrase of sorrow
Conjures the wand'ring stars, and makes them stand
Like wonder-wounded hearers? This is I,
(*Leaps into the grave.*)

Hamlet the Dane.

Laer. The devil take thy soul! (*Grappling with him.*)

Ham. Thou pray'st not well.

I pr'ythee take thy fingers from my throat;

(1) *Crants*—garlands.

(2) *Burial*, here, means interment in consecrated ground.

For, though I am not splenetic and rash,
Yet have I in me something dangerous,
Which let thy wisdom fear. Hold off thy hand !

King. Pluck them asunder.

(*They are parted, and come out of the grave.*)

Ham. Why, I will fight with him upon this theme,
Until my eyelids will no longer wag.

Queen. O, my son ! what theme ?

Ham. I lov'd Ophelia ; forty thousand brothers
Could not, with all their quantity of love,
Make up my sum. What wilt thou do for her ?

Queen. O, he is mad, Laertes.

Ham. Come, show me, what thou'lt do :
Woul't weep ? woul't fight ? woul't fast ? woul't tear
thyself ?

I'll do't. Dost thou come here but to whine ?
To outface me with leaping in her grave ?
Be buried quick with her, and so will I :
And, if thou prate of mountains, let them throw
Millions of acres on us ; till our ground,
Singing his pate against the burning zone,
Make Ossa like a wart ! Nay, an thou'lt mouth,
I'll rant as well as thou.

Queen. This is mere madness ;
And thus a while the fit will work on him ;
Anon, as patient as the female dove,
When that her golden couplets are disclos'd, (1)

(1) *Disclos'd*.—A great deal has been written on this word to little purpose, according to the usual mode of commenting upon Shakspeare. To *disclose*, simply means to open something, and thus show that which was concealed ; it neither has, nor can have, any other signification. Hence it is by our old writers applied, and with great propriety, to the hatching of eggs ; or, the opening of the bud in flowers. Many examples might be given, but our plan does not allow such superfluity ; we must content ourselves with two only.

“ One airy with proportion ne'er *discloses*
The eagle and the wren.” *Maid of Honour*, a. 1, s. 2.

“ The canker galls the infants of the spring
Too oft before their buttons be *disclos'd*. ” *Hamlet*, a. 1, s. 3.

This last example is from a part of “*Hamlet*,” omitted in the representation, and therefore, of course, left out in this edition, which follows the prompt-book literally, except when it adopts readings, as is often the case, too grossly incorrect for admission.

His silence will sit drooping.

Ham. Hear you, sir;
What is the reason that you use me thus?
I lov'd you ever: but it is no matter:
Let Hercules himself do what he may,
The cat will mew, and dog will have his day.

[*Exit*, R.H.]

King. I pray thee, good Horatio, wait upon him.

[*Exit Horatio*, R.H.]

Strengthen your patience in our last night's speech;
(*To Laertes.*)

We'll put the matter to the present push.

Good Gertrude, set some watch over your son.

[*Exeunt*, *Queen and Ladies*, R.H.]

This grave shall have a living monument:

An hour of quiet thereby shall we see;

Till then, in patience, our proceeding be. (*Bell tolls.*)
[*Exeunt through the gates.*]

SCENE II.—*A Hall in the Palace.*

Enter HAMLET and HORATIO, R.H.

Ham. But I am very sorry, good Horatio,
That to Laertes I forgot myself:
For, by the image of my cause, I see
The portraiture of his.

Hor. Peace.—Who comes here?

Enter OSRICK, L.H.D.

Osr. Your lordship is right welcome back to Denmark.

Ham. I humbly thank you, sir. Dost know this water-fly? (*Aside to Horatio.*)

Hor. No, my good lord.

Ham. Thy state is the more gracious; for 'tis a vice to know him.

Osr. Sweet lord, if your lordship were at leisure, I should impart a thing to you from his majesty.

Ham. I will receive it, sir, with all diligence of spirit.—Your bonnet to his right use; 'tis for the head.

Osr. I thank your lordship, 'tis very hot.

Ham. No, believe me, 'tis very cold; the wind is northerly.

Osr. It is indifferent cold, my lord, indeed.

Ham. But yet methinks, it is very sultry and hot; or my complexion—

Osr. Exceedingly, my lord; it is very sultry,—as 'twere—I cannot tell how.—My lord his majesty bade me signify to you, that he has laid a great wager on your head; sir, this is the matter—

Ham. I beseech you, remember—

(Hamlet signs to him to put on his hat.)

Osr. Nay, good my lord; for my ease, in good faith.—sir, here is newly come to court, Laertes: believe me an absolute gentleman, full of most excellent differences, of very soft society, and great showing: indeed to speak feelingly of him, he is the card or calendar of gentry; for you shall find in him the continent of what part a gentleman would see.

Ham. What imports the nomination of this gentleman?

Osr. Of Laertes?

Ham. Of him, sir.

Osr. You are not ignorant of what excellence Laertes is—

Ham. I dare not confess that, lest I should compare with him in excellence; but, to know a man well, were to know himself.

Osr. I mean, sir, for his weapon.

Ham. What is his weapon?

Osr. Rapier and dagger.

Ham. That's two of his weapons:—But, well,—

Osr. The king, sir, hath wager'd with him six Barbary horses: against the which he hath impawn'd, as I take it, six French rapiers and poniards, with their assigns, as girdle, hangers, and so: Three of the carriages, in faith, are very dear to fancy, very responsive

to the hilts, most delicate carriages, and of very liberal conceit.

Ham. What call you the carriages!

Osr. The carriages, sir, are the hangers.

Ham. The phrase would be more german to the matter, (1) if we could carry a cannon by our sides.

Osr. The king, sir, hath lay'd that in a dozen passes between yourself and him, he shall not exceed you three hits: and it would come to immediate trial, if your lordship would vouchsafe the answer.

Ham. How, if I answer, no?

Osr. I mean, my lord, the opposition of your person in trial.

Ham. Sir, it is the breathing time of day with me; let the foils be brought; the gentleman willing, and the king hold his purpose, I will win for him, if I can: if not, I will gain nothing but my shame, and the odd hits.

Osr. Shall I deliver you so?

Ham. To this effect, sir; after what flourish your nature will.

Osr. I commend my duty to your lordship.

[*Exit*, L.H.D.]

Hor. You will lose this wager, my lord.

Ham. I do not think so; since he went into France, I have been in continual practice; I shall win at the odds. But thou wouldst not think, how ill all's here about my heart: but it is no matter.

Hor. Nay, good my lord,—

Ham. It is but foolery: but it is such a kind of gain-giving, as would, perhaps, trouble a woman.

Hor. If your mind dislike any thing, obey it: I will forestall their repair hither, and say, you are not fit.

Ham. Not a whit, we defy augury; there is a special providence in the fall of a sparrow. [*Exeunt*, L.H.D.]

(1) *German to the matter?*—a-kin, appropriate to the matter.

SCENE III.—*The Court of Denmark.*

KING, QUEEN, LAERTES, OSRICK, MARCELIUS
BERNARDO, FRANCISCO, *Lords, and Ladies*
discover'd.—(*Flourish of Trumpets.*)

Enter HAMLET and HORATIO, L.H.

King. Come, Hamlet, come, and take this hand
from me. (*Giving Ham. Laertes's hand.*)

Ham. Give me your pardon, sir : I have done you
wrong : (*To Laertes.*)

But pardon it, as you are a gentleman.
Let my disclaiming from a purpos'd evil
Free me so far in your most generous thoughts,
That I have shot my arrow 'o'er the house,
And hurt my brother.

Laer. I am satisfied in nature,
Whose motive in this case, should stir me most
To my revenge :—

I do receive your offer'd love like love,
And will not wrong it.

Ham. I embrace it freely ;
And will this brother's wager frankly play.
Give us the foils.

Laer. Come, one for me.

Ham. I'll be your foil, Laertes ; in mine ignorance
Your skill shall, like a star i' the darkest night,
Stick fiery off indeed.

Laer. You mock me, sir.

Ham. No, by this hand.

King. Give them the foils, young Osrick.—Cousin
Hamlet,
You know the wager ?

Ham. Very well, my lord ;
Your grace hath laid the odds o' the weaker side.

King. I do not fear it ; I have seen you both ;—

But since he's better'd, we have therefore odds.

Laer. This is too heavy, let me see another.

Ham. This likes me well—these foils have all a length?

Osr. Aye, my good lord.

King. Set me the stoups of wine upon that table;
If Hamlet give the first or second hit,
Or quit (1) in answer of the third exchange,
Let all the battlements their ordnance fire;
The king shall drink to Hamlet's better breath;
And in the cup an union (2) shall he throw,
Richer than that which four successive kings
In Denmark's crown have worn.—Give me the cups,
(*To Francisco.*)

And let the kettle to the trumpet speak—
The trumpet to the cannoneer without—
The cannons to the heavens—the heaven to earth—
Now the king drinks to Hamlet. (*He drinks.*)
(*Drums and Trumpets sound—Cannons shot
off within.*)

Come, begin;
And you, the judges, bear a wary eye.

Ham. Come on, sir.

Laer. Come, my lord. (*They play.*)

Ham. One.

Laer. No.

Ham. Judgment.

Osr. A hit, a very palpable hit.

Laer. Well—again—

King. Stay, give me drink.—Hamlet, this pearl is thine;

Here's to thy health. (*He proceeds to drink.*)
(*Drums and Trumpets sound—Cannons shot
off within.*)

Give him the cup.

Ham. I'll play this bout first; set it by awhile.
Come—(*They play.*)—another hit.—What say you?

(1) *Quit*—i.e.—requite.

(2) *Union*—one of the richest sort of pearls.—*See Plin. Nat. Hist.*

Laer. A touch, a touch, I do confess.

King. Our son shall win.

Queen. The queen carouses to thy fortune, Hamlet. (*The Queen drinks, and returns the cup to Francisco.*)

Ham. Good, madam—

King. Gertrude, do not drink.—

Queen. I have, my lord.—I pray you, pardon me.

King. It is the poison'd cup—it is too late. (*Aside.*)

Laer. I'll hit him now;

And yet it is almost against my conscience. (*Aside.*)

Ham. Come, for the third, Laertes.—You do but dally;

I pray you, pass with your best violence;

I am afraid you make a wanton of me.

Laer. Say you so?—Come on. (*They play—Laertes wounds Hamlet; then, in scuffling, they exchange rapiers.*)

King. Part them; they are incens'd.

Ham. Nay, come again. (*Hamlet wounds Laertes, who falls.—The Queen swoons.*)

Osr. Look to the Queen there, ho!

Hor. How is it, my lord?

Osr. How is't Laertes?

Laer. Why, as a woodcock to my own springe, Osrick;

I am justly kill'd with mine own treachery.

Ham. How does the Queen?

King. She swoons to see them bleed.

Queen. No, no, the drink, the drink.—Oh, my dear Hamlet!—

The drink, the drink.—I am poison'd.— (*She dies.*)

Ham. Oh, villainy!—Ho! let the door be lock'd—
Treachery! seek it out.

Laer. It is here, Hamlet.—Hamlet, thou art slain;
No medicine in the world can do thee good;
In thee there is not half an hour's life;
The treacherous instrument is in thy hand,

Unbated, (1) and envenom'd ; the foul practice
 Hath turn'd itself on me ; lo, here I lie,
 Never to rise again ; thy mother's poison'd ;—
 I can no more ; (2)—the king, the king's to blame.

Ham. The point
 Envenom'd too ! Then venom to thy work.
(*Stabs the King.*)

Here, thou incestuous, murd'rous, damned Dane,
 Follow my mother. (*King dies.*)

Laer. He is justly serv'd.
 Exchange forgiveness with me, noble Hamlet :
 Mine and my father's death come not upon thee ;
 Nor thine on me ! (*He dies.*)

Ham. Heaven make thee free of it ! I follow thee.
 You that look pale and tremble at this chance,
 That are but mutes and audience to this act,
 Had I but time, as this fell serjeant, death,
 Is strict in his arrest, Oh, I could tell you.—
 But let it be.—Horatio,
 Report me and my cause aright
 To the unsatisfied.

Hor. Never believe it ;
 I am more an antique Roman than a Dane.—
 Here's yet some liquor left. (*Takes the cup.*)

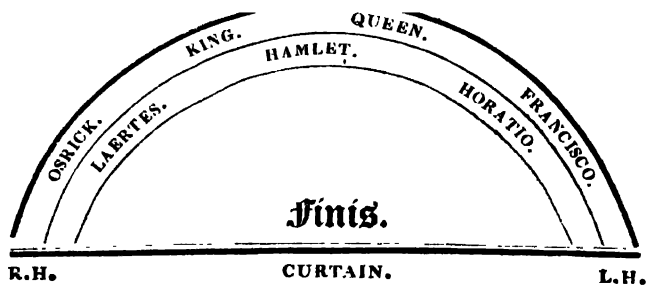
Ham. As thou'rt a man—(*Throws away the cup.*)
 Give me the cup—let go—by heaven, I'll have it.
 Oh, good Horatio, what a wounded name,
 Things standing thus unknown shall live behind me !
 If thou didst ever hold me in thy heart,
 Absent thee from felicity awhile,
 And in this harsh world draw thy breath in pain,
 To tell my story.—
 Oh ! I die, Horatio !—
 The potent poison quite o'ercrows (3) my spirit—
 The rest is silence. (*Hamlet dies.*)

(1) *Unbated*—i.e.—not blunted.

(2) *I can no more.*—The verb *can* (*können*, German,) is here used in its original sense—to be able—not as an auxiliary.

(3) *O'ercrows*—i.e.—overthrows.

Disposition of the Characters when the Curtain falls.





Orberry's Edition.

IS HE JEALOUS?

AN OPERETTA;

IN ONE ACT;

BY

Samuel Beazley, Esq.

THE ONLY EDITION EXISTING WHICH IS FAITHFULLY MARKED WITH
THE STAGE BUSINESS, AND STAGE DIRECTIONS,

AS IT IS PERFORMED AT THE THEATRE ROYAL

English Opera.

LONDON:

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Advertisement.

To the excellence of the performance, more than to its intrinsic merits, this Dramatic Trifle is indebted for the success which has attended its representation; and the Author begs leave to acknowledge, with his best thanks, those exertions which have given to his production more than an ephemeral existence.

PERSONS REPRESENTED.

<i>Belmour, a studious Man.....</i>	<i>Mr. Wrench.</i>
<i>Mrs. Belmour, his Wife.....</i>	<i>Mrs. W. S. Chatterley</i>
<i>Harriet, her Sister, in male attire.....</i>	<i>Miss Kelly.</i>
<i>Rose, her Woman.....</i>	<i>Mrs. Pincott.</i>

SCENE.—*A Drawing-room in Belmour's House.*

TIME.—*A Morning.*

Costume.

MR. BELMOUR.

White trowsers, fancy morning waistcoat, handsome dressing gown white ground with brown spots, pink frogs, lined with pink silk stockings, red slippers.

2 SERVANTS.

Liveries heavy after the manner of the Duke of Northumberland's.)

HARRIET.

1st. Dress — Fashionable green frock coat, lined with yellow silk, white waistcoat and trowsers, Wellington boots, round hat. 2nd Dress.—Elegant white satin.

MRS. BELMOUR.

Full dress for visiting, figured pink satin trimmed elegantly, head dress of flowers.

ROSE.

Light figured gown, white muslin neck handkerchief, and apron, cap, with green ribband twilled neatly round it.

Stage Directions.

By R.H.....	is meant.....	Right Hand.
L.H. ....	.....	Left Hand.
S.E. ....	.....	Second Entrance
U.E. ....	.....	Upper Entrance.
M.D. ....	.....	Middle Door.
D.F. ....	.....	Door in Flat.
R.H.D. ....	.....	Right Hand Door.
L.H.D. ....	.....	Left Hand Door.

Remarks.

WHETHER the present system of Theatrical monopoly is right or wrong, we shall not take upon ourselves to decide, but it is quite clear, that a monopoly on the one hand gives rise to certain claims on the other; when a trade of any kind is opened to all who chuse to embark in it, the buyer will be enabled to suit himself from the variety of the market; if he does not like the goods or price of one seller, he may apply to a second, a third, and so on till he meets with satisfaction; but limited as the Theatrical market now is, the public have a right to decide upon the quality and price of purchase. Above all, we think the introduction of French articles, unless when they are decidedly superior to our own produce, is a thing not to be tolerated; why are our own authors to be excluded from the stage to make room for pieces from the minor French Theatre? This is the way to ruin the modern English drama. Upon this principle we enter an absolute protest, as far as it may be allowed to us, against "Is He Jealous," which appears to be an alteration from some Vaudeville, and in its English dress is the work of an author, who had no occasion to, go to France for his materials; his farce of the "Boarding House," though it caricatures only external habits, and therefore must die with those habits, is yet worth a thousand of this description.

The language of this little piece is neat, but without much point, and with less character; there is no peculiar mark by

which to appropriate any part of the dialogue to its speaker; the plot is extremely simple but hardly probable, not that the want of probability can be considered as a very grievous defect in a farce, but it does not well agree with such simplicity of fable. The general tone of it is playful, arch, and gay, never perhaps rising to wit or humour, but never degenerating into dullness.

The Author of this piece is a native of London, and was born in Parliament-street in the year 1786. His dramatic pieces are the *Boarding House—Is he Jealous—Old Customs—My Uncle—Bachelor's Wives—Fire and Water—The Bull's Head—and Jealous on all Sides*. The whole produced at the English Opera House; to which Theatre he has been the architect as well as Author since it was rebuilt in the year 1815 from his designs.

IS HE JEALOUS?

SCENE I.—*A Drawing-room in Belmour's House—Two doors in flat—One leading to Belmour's Study, the other to Mrs. Belmour's Boudoir—A Piano Forte—A Sofa in the centre—A light nearly expiring on the Table—A Window looking into the Street—Day-light.*

Rose discovered sleeping upon the Sofa—her work in her Hands.

Bel. (Ringing Bell, and calling from his Study, R.H.) Williams! Williams! Williams, I say!

Rose. (Waking—Gaping.) Eh! What! My master calling—why, it is day-light, as I am alive, and my mistress not yet returned. Ah, if my master were awakened thus early by love instead of study—but there he sits in that room among his musty old books, while he suffers my handsome mistress to spend all her time by herself in that pretty boudoir of hers, from which he can almost hear her sigh for him; yet they say he loves her—Well, I can't think it, or he would never see with indifference the young and handsome Mr. Percival perpetually with her, at the theatre, balls, and every where. Wrapped up in study, he seems to forget that even my mistress is flesh and blood. He defied her yesterday to make him jealous, and swore it was impossible he could ever be so. *(Gaping.)* Oh

IS HE JEALOUS ?

lord, I am very sleepy;—while ladies are dancing away they seldom think of their poor servants who are sitting up for them at home.

SONG.

*Oh! would I were some lady bright,
To dance away the live long night,
Thro' pleasure's maze to roam,
In opera, ball or masquerade,
Instead of lowly waiting-maid,
To gape away at home.
Oh! then how gay—to dance away,
To opera, ball, or crowd at play,
Deck'd out in gaudy clothes,—
To dance and shine—so gay and fine,
And make a thousand lovers pine
To win the heart of Rose.
While waltzing here—chasséeing there,
'Twould be—as ever girl so fair!—
So fair and fine as Rose!
Partners pleasing—fingers squeezing—
Now poussetting—now coquetting,
Thro' fan spying—lovers sighing—
Was ever bliss so rare!
As waltzing here—chasséeing there,
While each one says, no girl so fair—
So fair and fine as Rose!*

Well, this is the first time my mistress has ever staid out in this way, however—perhaps she may at last give him cause to be jealous. Yes, yes, with the Argus eyes of a waiting-maid, I see how it will end—intrigue—plot—
—I see it all. (*Noise in Study.*) Ah, he is coming
—I must not for the world let him know my mistress has been out all night.

Enter BELMOUR, R.H.—A Volume in his hand.

(Reading.) “Trifles, light as air,
“Are to the jealous, confirmations strong
“As proofs of holy writ.”

This axiom is indeed a just censure upon the weakness of a jealous mind; and does Elizabeth suppose mine could ever admit such a feeling? Never!

Rose. (*Aside.*) Don't be too sure.

Bel. That husband is indeed deserving of pity, who, harbouring suspicion in his breast, turns an indefatigable Argus in his anxious watchings, and becomes the very shadow of his wife.

Rose. True, sir ; too much suspicion may offend our sex, but too great security is quite as displeasing to us, I assure you. The husband whose jealousy would see every thing, exposes himself to the danger he fears ; but he who sees nothing, exposes himself still more. To speak plainly, sir, I think you play a hazardous game.

Bel. To any one but me, Rose, I confess your opinion might be applicable; but I know my Elizabeth:—if she be occupied by gaieties, they are innocent; she pursues them to amuse herself, not to deceive me. Ought I to transform the marriage ring into a chain of bondage?

Rose. Certainly not, sir !

Bel. She always returns early, and quits the giddy throng with favourable dispositions towards the retirement of her own home. My friend Percival, who knows so well how to combine amusement with philosophy, always attends her.

Rose. (Aside.) Lord, lord, was ever such a man!

Bel. May I wake your mistress, Rose?

Rose. It is yet very early, sir; my mistress was very tired last night, sir—Pardon me, sir, but I think she had better sleep a little longer, sir.

Bel. I will wait then till she rings.

Rose. (Aside.) You will wait some time then, I fancy.

Bel. No, no; a few hours spent in amusement at her age, preserve and occupy the elasticity of youth—and you, for such a trifle, would have me jealous. I am as sure of my wife as I am of myself; our love and confidence is mutual—she sleeps beyond her usual hour this morning; I must steal silently to her pillow, and snatch one kiss from her rosy lips as she sleeps.

Rose. (Stopping him.) Oh no, sir, you had better not—my mistress was very tired when she went to bed; she was indeed, sir; and besides she had a—a—

Bel. Well, well, I will not disturb her.

Rose. (Aside.) Thank heaven!

Bel. I will occupy myself till she wakes, with this problem, which Percival has given me to solve—He has found it too difficult. *(Sits down.)*

Rose. (Aside.) Lord, lord, I wish he'd go. *(Loud)* You'll be less interrupted in your study, sir.

Bel. No, no, I am very well here—be quiet.

Rose. (Aside.) That he may not occupy himself with his wife, Mr. Percival gives my master a more difficult problem to solve than woman; while he—Oh, I see it all—*(Noise of a carriage, Rose looks out of Window, L.H.)* As I am alive, my mistress—what shall I do now? *(Anxiously.)*—You would be much better in your own room, sir, indeed you would.

Bel. No, no, let me alone.

Rose. (Aside) The devil take the problem—my mistress will come in—all will be known—Oh, I see it all. *(Loud.)* The servants will be wanting to clean the room, sir, and you'll be in the way.

(Knocking at Door.)

Bel. Ah! who can that be so early?.

Rose. I shall die of fright.

Bel. See who it is, Rose.

Rose. Its nobody, sir.

Bel. Oh, let him in—

Rose. 'Tis some mistake—some runaway knock, sir, most likely.

Bel. Look who it is, I say.

Rose. It is Mr. What's-his-name—Mr.—Oh lord, I've forgotten his name.

Bel. (*Rises, goes towards Window, but is stopped by Rose.*) I must see myself then.

(*knocks again.*)

Rose. It is Mr. Percival, sir.

Bel. Ah, anxious about his problem, I suppose—He never suffers his pleasures to interrupt his studies. I am nearly ready for him. (*Knock.*) I'll to my study for a pen. Quick ! run and admit Mr. Percival, I will be with him in a few minutes. [*Exit into his Study, R.H.*]

Rose. Thank heaven, he is gone.

Mrs. Bel. (*Without.*) I believe you are right, Mr. Percival, I will follow your advice. Send her therefore the moment she arrives ; make haste, or you'll be too late—farewell.

Rose. Ah ! she dismisses Mr. Percival in haste.—She fears lest my master should see him—Oh, it is clear—I see it all—poor Mr. Belmour !

Enter Mrs. BELMOUR L.H.

Mrs. Bel. Why, all the men were asleep, I think. I knocked three times—

Rose. (*In a low tone.*) Hush, ma'am, speak lower.

Mrs. Bel. (*Loudly.*) Speak lower ! for what reason ?

Rose. (*Pointing to the Study Door.*) My master is there, ma'am

Mrs. Bel. Ah, in his study so early ! what can engage such particular attention ?

Rose. A problem, madam.

Mrs. Bel. He is a problem himself, I think. Do you know why he did not join me at Mrs. Wildishes' ball ?

Rose. He was hard at work with his books.

Mrs. Bel. Books, books ! nothing but books. They are his business—his pleasure—his every thing. Was he uneasy at my absence ?

Rose. Not at all, ma'am.

Mrs. Bel. Did he sit up for me long?

Rose. Oh no, ma'am. He went to bed at his usual hour.

Mrs. Bel. Heigho! what a strange mortal. Has he entered my apartment this morning?

Rose. (*Cunningly.*) Oh no, ma'am; he wished it, but I knew how to hinder him.

Mrs. Bel. Hinder him! and why should you hinder him?

Rose. (*Mysteriously.*) I told him you were asleep, ma'am.

Mrs. Bel. (*Loudly and surprised.*) Asleep!

Rose. Yes, yes, for heaven's sake speak lower.

Mrs. Bel. What! I have passed the night out, and he does not even know it!

Rose. No, madam, he has not the least idea of such a thing, I managed it so well.

Mr. Bel. (*Angrily and proudly.*) And by what authority did you use this management? Did I order you to be silent? Know for the future, that such conduct is in the highest degree displeasing to me; and if you value my favour, you will never repeat it.

Rose. Was ever such ingratitude! lord ma'am, I thought to oblige you by it.

Mrs. Bel. You have seriously offended me.

Rose. Ah, madam, pray pardon me, such an intention was the farthest from my thoughts, believe me.

Mrs. Bel. Remember for the future, that nothing mysterious must ever attach itself to my conduct.

Rose. No, ma'am.

Mrs. Bel. Mystery implies guilt, and authorizes suspicion.

Rose. Yes ma'am.

Mrs. Bel. To atone for your fault, go instantly and tell Mr. Belmour that I am but this moment arrived. Do you hear me?

Rose. Ma'am!

Mrs. Bel. Obey me then directly.

Rose. Yes, ma'am—(*Aside.*) Oh lord, was ever such woman? [*Exit angrily into the Study, R.H.*]

Mrs. Bel. It is but too plain—neither to come to me, nor to wait for me—to sleep peaceably in my absence—to leave me a whole night besieged by a thousand coxcombs. Free from all suspicion, and happy in his solitary pursuits, in his learned retreat he forgets his Elizabeth.—Heigho! I can suffer it no longer; in cultivating the head, he forgets the heart.—I must try and rouse him from this lethargy of indifference—Yes, Percival, I will follow your advice—I will try him—my sister, who arrives this day, will answer my purpose. Let me see what time she will be here—(*Reads Letter.*) *At length, my dear Elizabeth, I have settled my late husband's affairs. I am free—am arrived in England, a young and not unhand-some widow. My old general, you know, was my father's choice; my next shall be my own. Obligated to travel alone on the Continent, where such things are not so uncommon as in our own prudent country, I have made my journey in disguise; and being yet unwilling to put off, what are frequently the only attributes upon which the other sex claim their superiority, I will show you what a spruce beau your sister Harriet makes, before I resume my own clothes.*—Ah, spruce enough, my wild sister. The very thing to play the part of a dangerous lover—(*Reads.*) *I shall be at home on the 10th, early in the morning, where I shall expect you to welcome me—your sister Harriet.*—This is the very morning—Percival is gone to meet her, and explain our plan; and heaven grant that I may be made happy by making my husband jealous.

Enter Rose, pushed out of the Study Door, R.H.

Rose. Was ever such madness!

Mrs. Bel. Well, Rose! Is Mr. Belmour coming?

Rose. No, ma'am.

Mrs. Bel. Have you not told him I am waiting?

Rose. Oh, yes, ma'am, I told him often enough, and loud enough.

Mrs. Bel. Well!

Rose. His arms cross'd—his head buried up to his ears in his shoulders—his eye fixed upon the Turkey carpet—he muttered some words in a low voice. For my part, I think he is possessed, and that it was the devil that spoke within him. My mistress is arrived, says I—not a word—She is waiting for you, says I again—still silent—she is impatient to see you, cried I as loud as I could bawl in his ear; he started up, looked terribly angry, seized me by the shoulders, shook the breath out of my body, banged me out of the room, and sat down again quietly to his mathematics, as though nothing had happened.

Mrs. Bel. This is too much—

Rose. I am sure, ma'am, my master is crazed.

Mrs. Bel. It is indeed time that I should attempt his cure. (*Knocking at the Door.*)

Rose. Ah, somebody knock [Exit, L.H.]

Mrs. Bel. It is my sister

Enter ROSE, ga L.H.

Rose. La, ma'am! here's such a handsome young stranger asking for you, and impatient to see you.

Mrs. Bel. Show him in.

Rose. He is coming, ma'am. Well, how genteel he is!

Har. (*Coming up stairs—speaking without, in a familiar, but foppish tone of voice.*) Up stairs—very well—I'll find her—don't trouble yourself, friend.

Mrs. Bel. Yes, 'tis she.

Enter HARRIET, in Men's Clothes, L.H.

She approaches to embrace Mrs. Belmour, who points to Rose—Harriet stops suddenly, and affects confusion and mystery.

Mrs. Bel. (*After a pause.*) Leave us, Rose.

Rose. (*Without moving.*) Yes ma'am. (*Aside.*)

Who can it be? Now I shall hear and see every thing.

Mrs. Bel. Leave us, I say; nor return to the drawing-room till I call you.

Rose. (*Aside.*) Dear! dear! I shall hear and see nothing—Yes, ma'am. (*Aside.*) Oh, I see it all—my poor master! [*Exit, L.H.*]

Mrs. Bel. At length, then, you are here; my heart is happy once more to embrace my dear Harriet; I was impatient to see you.

Har. Your impatience could not exceed mine; seas have divided us for years. I am an old campaigner, but tired of the wars, I am returned with joy to my native country, and will inhabit no place which is not occupied by my charming sister.

Mrs. Bel. Well, then, let us to our project; time presses.

Har. Oh, I am quite *au fait*; Percival has told me your case, and I have undertaken the cure. A husband dare determine not to be jealous!—we'll see—we'll try him, and be revenged!—be so indifferent within a year after marriage, if I burn with indignation; but first tell me, I do? have I the airs and graces of a pretty fellow—such a fellow now, as one of the thousand butterflies who flutter round married women, with no hope but that of making husbands uncomfortable—no triumph but making them jealous, without any other motive than making themselves notorious, and often without any other result than making themselves ridiculous? Well, d'ye think I shall do?

Mrs. Bel. It is impossible to be better; the more I examine you, the more I doubt if I am really speaking to my sister Harriet.

Har. Let the enemy appear then, and we will soon gain the victory. Where is he?

Mrs. Bel. As usual, in his study—Ah, he comes!

Enter BELMOUR from his Study, R.H.—Paper in his hand, which he is reading.—He appears animated with pleasure at having solved the Problem, and passes before his Wife and HARRIET to the front of the Stage without seeing them.

Bel. At length it is solved—As A is to B, so is B to C.

Mrs. Bel. He is so wrapp'd up in his mathematics, that he has not even seen us.

Bel. And as B is to C, 'so is the square of A K.—Yes, 'tis correct—quite correct.

Mrs. Bel. (*Advancing towards Belmour with Harriet.*) Mr. Belmour—

Bel. (*Still reading Paper.*) Pardon me, my dear Elizabeth, I really did not perceive you. What is become of Percival?

Mrs. Bel. He accompanied me home, but departed instantly.

Bel. Gone! without his problem! I hope he will return presently. (*Contemplating his Paper.*) What a complete solution! So concise, yet so clear.

Mrs. Bel. His brain is certainly turned.

Har. What a happy species of insanity! I should enjoy it in a husband of mine amazingly.

Mrs. Bel. And I am enraged at it.

Har. He pays me no more attention, than if I were a piece of furniture.—(*Bowing to Belmour.*)—I have the honour, sir—

Mrs. Bel. A little louder.

Har. I say, sir, I have the honour to see—

Bel. (*Still at his Problem.*) What perception! What perspicuity!

Har. (*Laughing.*) He sees—he hears nothing—it was thus—I suppose, that Archimedes dreamt in Syracuse, while Marcellus took the city.

Mrs. Bel. Think rather of revenging me than laughing at him.

Har. (Approaching Belmour.) Sir, I have the honour—

Bel. (Starting.) Ah! A stranger!

Mrs. Bel. It is a young and learned relation and friend of my family. He is just returned from his travels, and I thought you would be delighted to know him. He is come to England expressly to—to renew his acquaintance with me. Knowing that, like yourself, he was fond of literature and science, I have anticipated your wishes by this introduction.

Bel. So young! and at an age when pleasure forms the general object of pursuit, does your friend already cultivate and cherish the nobler arts?

Mrs. Bel. O yes—Hebrew—Greek—Algebra—every thing.

Bel. 'Tis well; he is your friend, he must be mine. (*Offers his hand—Harriet takes Mrs. Belmour's.*)

Har. (Kissing Mrs. Belmour's hand.) Ah, sir, you must permit me on the hand of your charming lady to thank her for her unmerited eulogy.

Bel. (Waiting till Harriet has done kissing Mrs. Belmour's hand, which she does several times.) Sir, I really beg your pardon, but—

Har. (With a careless foppish air.) You see I treat Elizabeth without any ceremony; educated together under the same roof, we have contracted these little habits of intimacy; they go no farther, I assure you; they need not make you uneasy—Oh dear, no—not at all—need they, Elizabeth? (*Looking and smiling at Mrs. Belmour, who smiles in return, while Belmour gradually assumes an appearance of surprise.*) Don't you observe some resemblance between us—something analogous to fraternity. It is sympathy, all sympathy, I assure you—downright legitimate sympathy. In my travels, I could think of nothing amidst the variety by which I was surrounded, but Elizabeth; my tender friendship decorated every landscape in imagination with her sylph-like form. (*Mrs. Belmour smiles.*) Ah, what a modest blush suffuses her lovely cheek! What a charming smile

plays around the dimples of her lips ! 'The rose caressed by the morning zephyr, is not more sweet, more fresh.

SONG.

*Nature, with her fairy finger,
Never gave the blushing rose,
Tints so warm as those which linger,
Where thy lovely cheeks repose.
Toiling slaves, of freedom dreaming,
Never drew from eastern mine,
Diamonds half so brightly beaming,
As those sparkling eyes of thine.*

Mrs. Bel. (Coquettishly.) Ah ! now you flatter me.

Bel. (Aside.) Am I awake !

Har. To find modesty thus united with beauty, is indeed a rarity. Upon my faith, I see London is the place at last, to form the complete woman ; for, without compliment, I find you amazingly improved since you have quitted our shades of rustic retirement. It is a year, I think, since we were used to wander through the groves, to listen to the tender nightingale.—Yes, a year since, when enraged at your departure, I quitted home within an hour after you left the village. Your absence deprived it of every attraction. Since that period, I have trod upon classic ground—contemplated the triumphal arches of Roman conquerors, and wept upon the tomb of Virgil—marched with a bounding heart over the plains of Marathon—and pondered with a bleeding one upon the rock so fatal to the tender Sappho. The capitals of Europe have, by turns, been my residence—men of literature, and women of beauty and wit, have been my companions ; but I have traversed the world in vain, to find so many charms and delights as are concentrated here.,

Bel. Since London, sir, possesses your favourable

opinion, perhaps it is your intention to settle among us, sir.

Har. A good guess—my project exactly.—I never more shall quit the spot inhabited by Mrs. Belmour. (*Smiles with Mrs. Belmour.*)

Bel. (*Aside.*) What does he mean ? Is this inexperience or folly, or merely an assumption of the levity of foreign manners ? I begin not to like him—Rose—

Enter ROSE, running, L.H.

—Order the breakfast.

Rose. It is coming, sir.

Bel. You will, I trust, favour our breakfast-table with your company.

Har. (*Giving his Hat and Gloves to Rose.*) To be sure I shall. Did you think I would not breakfast with you ?

Rose. (*Aside.*) Free and easy, however.

(*Servants lay Breakfast.*)

Har. By the bye, I intended taking up my quarters in town, at your friend Percival's ; but really it is so crowded with Venuses, Apollos, Egyptian mummies, cauldrons, crucibles, and electrifying machines, that I fear there will be no room for me. I shall dread receiving an electric shock at the touch of every bell-pull, and shall expect to be embraced at every turn, by some of his spring-moving anatomies. So that, (*with nonchalance*)—if quite convenient—I shall be vastly happy—to—take—up—my—residence with—you—during my stay in town, (*Silence*)—Eh ! Mis—ter Bel—mour.

Bel. (*Aside ; but heard by Rose.*) What ! make my house his home !

Rose. Lord, sir, there's no doubt of that.—His carriage is already in the coach-house, his horses in the stable, and his servants in the attics.

Mrs. Bel. (*To Harriet.*) To the life—my dear sister, to the life.

Bel. (*Aside.*) Ah, they whisper—what new feeling

is this. Come, my love, the breakfast waits, your friend must need refreshment.

(*Mr. Belmour presents his Hand to Mrs. Belmour; Harriet does the same: Mrs. Belmour hesitates, but finishes by taking Harriet's. Belmour starts with surprise, and attempts to take a chair, which Harriet takes from him, and he remains in front.*)

Har. (*Seating Mrs. Belmour, and taking her own Seat at the head of the Table*). Come, Belmour—excuse my calling you Belmour—Come, sit down.

(*Belmour sits—Harriet makes the Tea—his surprise increases.*)

—Now, sir, black or green?—*Mrs. Belmour*, chocolate or coffee? Lord you have no appetite, sir.—You appear thoughtful, my lovely friend.

Mrs. Bel. I was thinking of the possibility of making your intended apartment agreeable.

Bel (*Ironically*.) Really! had your friend done me the honour to advise me of his intended visit, I should have done my best endeavours to have accommodated him. But as it is—

Har. Oh, never mind—never mind—you will not find me over-scrupulous. The humblest apartment—(*To Mrs. Belmour.*)—near to you, madam, will be delightful; now that, for instance—or that—or the blue room.

Bel. (*Aside.*) Upon my word, he disposes of my house as though it were his own!

Mrs. Bel. You are amazingly good.

Rose. (*Aside*.) Amazingly!

Mrs. Bel. Will you indulge us with your society long?

Bel. Oh, no doubt!

Har. Upon my honour, madam, my hopes of pleasure, while domesticated with you, are so great, that, with your permission, we will not anticipate a separation.

Rose. (*Aside.*) Lord help us!—what impudence!

Bel. (Aside.) But you are not yet domesticated, thank heaven!

Har. Then I shall, for the future, make your house my home—give my cards of address here—order my parcels to be directed here—dine my friends here—and all that. Upon my word, Belmour, you have such a way of putting one at one's ease, that I am as much at home already, as though I had been living here these twenty years.

Bel. (Aside.) Astonishing impertinence!

Rose. (Aside.) Oh, it is a settled thing—my mistress is in the plot—I see it all!

Mrs. Bel. Come, sir, you are a great voyager, and have doubtless seen many things worthy of observation.

Har. Yes, madam, I have indeed seen much. In every country I have associated with the philosopher, as well as the courtier—made love to the women, and raked with the men—danced fandangos with the Spaniards—waltzed with the Germans, and cotillionized with the French: and, at the end of a long and perilous pilgrimage, in the pursuit of philosophy, I find that its best source is pleasure—that the best pleasure is woman; and if you will hear my dull finger on the piano, and my croaking voice will not disturb the meditations of Mr. Belmour, you shall hear my sentiment in a song.

Mrs. Bel. Oh! by all means. (*Goes to the Piano with Harriet.*)

Har. (After playing a Prelude.) Were my tongue to describe the sensation of my heart at the sound of this piano, it would say they arose because the keys were sometimes touched by the fair hand of Elizabeth.

Mrs. Bel. I play but little.

(*Sets herself by the side of Harriet—Belmour, who has been lost in thought, looks up at Harriet's last Speech, and appears troubled.*)

SONG.—HARRIET.

*With study to fill up our leisure,
Let ancient philosophers preach;*

*'Tis better to fill it with pleasure,
Both nature and sympathy teach.*

*Believe me, the man is mistaken,
Who in books only finds his delight :
No study to pleasure can waken,
Like studying eyes that are bright.*

*If by physiognomy learning,
The mind through the features to trace ;
Grave brows of philosophers spurning,
I'd study in woman's sweet face.*

*If astronomy's wonders had charms, sir,
My stars shouldn't be in the sky ;
My Zodiac would be in her arms, sir,
My planets would beam in her eye.*

Mrs. Bel. Delightful !

Rose. (*Aside.*) Ah, my mistress is pleased, and my master is enraged.

Mrs. Bel. The verses too are delightful !

Rose. My master thinks otherwise—he'll be jealous at last, thank heaven.

[*Exit with breakfast things, L.H.*

Har. I am proud indeed of your approbation ; and if you will design to assist me in my studies, I think I shall soon defy even Mr. Belmour himself to surpass me.

Mrs. Bel. There are many learned men whom I consider estimable ; but if they resembled you, they would indeed be irresistible.

Bel. (*Aside, starting.*) Ah, that observation was directed at me ;—by heavens, she laughs at me !

Har. Mr. Belmour is ill, I fear ; he appears agitated.

Bel. (*With emotion.*) Agitated ! oh, no—no, sir—

it is impossible to be otherwise than agitated—agreeably, sir, in your society.

Mrs. Bel. Oh, no—it is his manner only ; Mr. Belmour is generally so wrapped up in study, that outward objects are indifferent to him. He pursues the speculations of his own mind in society, and—(*Anxiously to Belmour.*) But you appear *really* ill, Mr. Belmour—perhaps—(*Inquiringly.*)—perhaps you are jealous ?

Bel. Jealous ! I jealous, madam ! What, of a boy—of a boy ! No, no, madam !

Mrs. Bel. (*Coldly and disappointed.*) A boy ! Oh, in modern days, manhood commences early. Look through society, who are our greatest libertines ? Your boys ! Who are the danglets after your demireps of fashion ? Your boys ! But perhaps—(*Anxiously*) you may have an objection to extend your hospitality so far as to admit my friend as an inmate.

Bel. (*Aside.*) I must hide these feelings, and appear tranquil. Oh, no, madam, quite the contrary ; I shall be happy—very—ha—happy in his society.

Mrs. Bel. (*To Harriet, disappointedly.*) Ah, he consents to it.

Har. So much the better.

Mrs. Bel. But he is not jealous.

Har. Hush ! he observes us.

Bel. (*Aside.*) Yes, yes, 'tis plain—there is some mystery—some plot—some—surely I'm not jealous.

Har. (*To Mrs. Belmour.*) He begins to be uneasy—I see the first symptoms.

Bel. (*Aside.*) And I am to admit him as an inmate too !

Har. (*To Mrs. Belmour.*) Courage ! The symptoms redouble—he talks to himself.

Bel. I must be satisfied—I will interrogate Percival. (*Loud.*) You have known my friend Percival for some time ?

Har. Oh, yes, from infancy.

Bel. He conducted you here ?

Har. Oh, no; he was too much immersed in some philosophical experiment—the decomposition of some mineral fluid. By the bye, I beg ten thousand pardons, but he desired me to say, that he was anxiously waiting your assistance in the solution of some problem. You had better go.

Bel. Yes, true; you say he expects me—I will go—*(Aside.)* Shall I leave them together?

Mrs. Bel. You will not be very long, I suppose, Mr. Belmour?

Bel. (Aside.) Ah, she wishes me gone. She wants to ascertain the moment of my return; but I am not jealous. *(Loud.)* Perhaps you will accompany me, sir. *(Anxiously trying to take Harriet with him.)*

Har. No, no, I am obliged to you. I am vastly well here—use no ceremony with me I beg.—Your Elizabeth will find me entertainment—you'd better go.—Don't let me detain you from your friend.

Bel. (Aside.) Impudence! Elizabeth! but I am not jealous.—Yes, I will go—but will return and surprise them.—*(Loud.)* Your pardon for leaving you, but—jealous! ridiculous! yet 'tis very odd all this.

Har. Oh never mind—good morning. You had better make haste, or the fluid will be decomposed, and the experiment over before your arrival. Good morning.

Bel. (Aside.) The coxcomb turns me out of my own house.—I am thunderstruck—but as to jealousy, that's too absurd an idea.—Pshaw! nonsense! I am not jealous.

[Exit, L.H. but returns in a minute—looks at Harriet and Mrs. Belmour.]

Har. Well!

Bel. Well!

Mrs. Bel. Are you come back for any thing?

Bel. Yes, I am come back for—I am come back—I am not jealous. *[Exit hastily, L.H.]*

Mrs. Bel. You see it is of no use.—He departs—he leaves us together.—Such coldness—such indiffer-

ence irritates me more than I can express. After having absolutely roused his suspicions, to leave us thus *tête à tête*, is unbearable.

Har. Curious enough, to be sure. There are many women, I fear who would be delighted with so *easy* a husband.

Mrs. Bel. 'Tis plain he loves me not.

Har. I am not so certain of that yet.

Mrs. Bel. What more can I do to prove it ?

Har. Stop ! an idea strikes me. If I recollect right, your boudoir is so sacred to yourself, that even he is seldom admitted.

Mrs. Bel. True. .

Har. We will enter it, and remain there till his return. If that does not rouse his jealousy, he is incorrigible, and I give him up.

Mrs. Bel. (*Alarmed.*) I fear we shall go too far.

Har. 'Tis desperate—but the only means left; and, the better to deceive him, we will bribe your servant.

Mrs. Bel. I tremble—

Har. Nonsense, it must be done; and I see Rose coming.

Enter ROSE, L.H.

(*Harriet kisses Mrs. Belmour's hand ardently.*)

—Oh how sweet are such moments as these !—They are worth the rest of our lives !

Rose. (*At the top of the stage, aside.*) Can I believe my eyes ?

Har. (*Feigning surprise.*) Ah, we are observed—so much the better. Now place her quickly as a centinel.

Mrs. Bel. (*Hesitating.*) Rose—

Rose. Ma—a—m.

Mrs. Bel. (*Hesitating still.*) Rose—

Har. Come, come, courage.

Mrs. Bel. Is Mr. Belmour gone out, Rose.

Rose. Oh yes, Ma'am he is already in the next street. He went out in such haste, he forgot to take off his dressing-gown. (*Aside.*) What can all this mean?

Mrs. Bel. Do you think he will be long absent?

Rose. No doubt, ma'am. He is gone about his philosophy business.

Mrs. Bel. True, true, Rose, I know your prudence. I can depend on your fidelity.

Rose. Oh yes, ma'am, that you may. (*Aside.*) I do see it all now.

Mrs. Bel. I know it, dear Rose.

Rose. (*Aside.*) Dear Rose!—Oh, I can be useful here.

Mrs. Bel. My friend wishes much to see the drawings, which he well remembers to have made when we were children. They are in the boudoir.

Rose. (*Aside.*) The boudoir!—Yes, ma'am.

Mrs. Bel. I wish to show them to him—without—without the danger of interruption.

Rose. Yes, ma'am. (*Aside.*) Oh lord, I see it all.

Mrs. Bel. You, my good Rose—stay here—and prevent any body from—from—

Har. You understand, my good Rose.—Now mind, guard your post well—be vigilant and, above all, be discreet. (*Gives her a purse.*)

Rose. Yes, yes, sir—Well, was ever—but my master, madam,—should he return!

Mrs. Bel. Your master!

Har. Detain him here.—We would not be interrupted for the world by him. That would be vastly unpleasant.

Rose. Well, I am absolutely astounded!

Har. Now, my lovely Elizabeth—the pictures—

[*Exeunt Harriet and Mrs. Belmour into boudoir.*]

Rose. His lovely Elizabeth! lord! lord! well, I never was so surprised! lord! I do believe they've lock'd the door—Oh, 'tis plain—'tis clear—poor Mr. Belmour!—poor Mr. Philosopher! well, I can scarcely believe my eyes, nor my ears, nor my tongue. Eh!

what's that? who is coming? my master, as I am alive! I shall die of fright.

Enter BELMOUR, agitated extremely, L.H.

Bel. Known and loved each other from infancy! Tenderness unabated! Constancy unequalled! Would not introduce him himself—and coming to put me on my guard!

Rose. (*Aside.*) What do I hear!

Bel. Yes, yes, 'tis evident, he is still beloved—that I am deceived! Oh, agonies till now unknown! What shall I do? Where fly! How revenge! I'll smother him—Rose—Rose—

Rose. Here, sir—lord, I'm in such a tremble.

Bel. Come near—come near, I say. (*Passionately.*)

Rose. Ye—e—es, Sir.

Bel. Where is your mistress?

Rose. Who—o—o—o, Sir? My mis—is—istress, sir?

Bel. Answer me instantly—where is she?

Rose. She is, sir—she is sir—in the bou—bou—boudoir, sir.

Bel. Ah! (*Approaches the Door.*)

Rose. (*Stopping him.*) Sir, my mistress, sir—my mistress—

Bel. Well—

Rose. Desired not to be interrupted, sir.

Bel. Ah, a mystery! And this friend—this new comer—where is he? (*Passionately.*) Where is this coxcomb, I say?

Rose. Coc—oc—oc—oc—xcomb, sir!

Bel. Your mistress's new friend—my would-be visitor—where is he? answer me, or—

Rose. I will—I will, sir. But I'm afraid you'll be angry, sir.

Bel. (*Restraining himself with difficulty.*) No—no, I am quite—quite cool.—Speak—speak—

Rose. He is with my lady, sir.

Bel. (*Breathless.*) What ! in the bou—bou—boudoir ?

Rose. Ye—e—s, sir.

Bel. Incredible audacity ! But I will confound them. (*Goes to the Boudoir Door.*) Ah, the door locked ! This is too much—heaven grant me patience ! Stand aside—stand aside, I say, I *will* enter.

(*Pushes Rose aside—rushes to the door, which opens, and discovers Mrs. Belmour and Harriet, who enter—Belmour starts and regards them with fury.*)

Mrs. Bel. Ah, my husband ! Fly, my friend !

Har. (*With nonchalance.*) Fly ! What, run away ! No, no, his presence is not quite so redoubtable.

Bel. He adds insult to our rage.

Rose. For heaven's sake leave her, sir—his anger will drive him to some act of violence.

Har. Oh, never fear, this is not the first time I have had to encounter a jealous husband !

Rose. (*Aside.*) There'll be murder—I see it all !

Bel. Quit the house, sir, instantly—quit the roof whose hospitality you have violated.—I shall seek you at Percival's, and you know what must follow.

Har. What, quit Elizabeth ! no, no, you will ill treat her ; besides, why should you be so unreasonable as to separate us !

Rose. (*Aside.*) Lord, I tremble with fright at his impudence !

Bel. Quit the house instantly, that my own floors may not be stained with the blood my vengeance calls for.

Har. Well, since you are at present a little warm—

Bel. A little warm ! a little devil !—Quit my sight !—quit my sight, I say, lest my house prove no longer a protection to its inmate.

Har. Don't go too far, Mr. Belmour.

Rose. (*Dragging off Harriet.*) Oh, come, sir, for heaven's sake leave him. He is jealous.

(*Draws Harriet off during the following Trio.*)

TRIO.—HARRIET, ROSE, and BELMOUR.

Har. Poor man, he is jealous at last!

Bel. With fury my bosom's enrag'd.

Har. P'll return when your anger is past.

Mrs. B. y u'll be then disengag'd.

Har. & } Ha! ha! ha!

Rose. } Poor man, he is jealous at last!

Bel. I shall murder the fellow at last!

Bel. Quit my sight, let me see him no longer.

Har. Dearest madam, pray pinion him fast.

Bel. Than reason my passion is stronger,

Har. Poor man, he is jealous at last!

Har. & } Ha! ha! ha!

Rose. } Poor man, he is jealous at last!

Bel. I shall murder the fellow at last!

Har. Ah, now should you tell us,

You'll never be jealous,

Such principles we will refute,

For evil's the hour,

When man dares the power

Of woman supreme, to dispute.

Bel. Quit my sight, let me see him no longer.

Har. Dearest madam, pray pinion him fast.

Bel. Than reason my passion is stronger.

Har. Poor man, he is jealous at last!

Har. & } Ha! ha! ha!

Rose. } Poor man, he is jealous at last!

Bel. I shall murder the fellow at last!

[*Exeunt Rose and Harriet, R.H.*

(*Belmour falls into a Chair.*)

Mrs. Bel. (Aside.) Ah, I triumph! my doubts of his love are dissipated. He is enraged, and I begin to be happy—Belmour—

Bel. (Rising.) Speak not a word. Adieu! adieu! for ever.

Mrs. Bel. Will you not listen to me? One word will restore you to tranquillity. You are deceived.

Bel. Deceived!—true!—I am deceived—wretchedly—miserably deceived; but I will be revenged. Leave me, madam—quit my sight for ever. Your minion paramour shall pay with his life the forfeit of your mutual guilt; while you shall linger on your miserable existence despised by all, an outcast from society!

Mrs. Bel. Nay, nay, whence comes this blind ungovernable fury? Where is your philosophy?

Bel. (*After a pause, in an agony of passion.*) I am jealous!

Mrs. Bel. (*Joyfully.*) Then I am loved and happy!

Bel. Happy!

Mrs. Bel. Yes, Belmour, did you know the happiness these transports occasion me, you would have been jealous long—long before.

Bel. Yes, madam, but I was deceived by your appearances of virtue—deluded by your expressions of affection. But I have discovered all—this friend—this cousin (the devil cozen him!) was always beloved by you—always preferred—opportunity was only wanting to complete my dishonour. But vengeance shall fall upon the devoted head—

Enter HARRIET, *as a Woman*, and ROSE, R.H.

Har. Of your humble servant, I suppose.

Bel. What do I see?

Mrs. Bel. My sister Harriet, whom you have often wished as a companion to your Elizabeth. Can you forgive me the deceit? (*All laugh at him.*)

Bel. A woman! a real woman!

Har. Yes, sir, a true woman, upon my honour.

Rose. I answer for that, sir.

Har. I suppose you will now consent a little more cheerfully to my abode here. 'Twas but a *ruse de marriage*, to revenge my sister for your indifference—let it be a lesson for you, not to defy the power of our sex, to make even a philosopher jealous.

Bel. I see it is not enough to love—we must also show our affection. Like other philosophers, I confess

your fascinating power; but beware how you use it wantonly, lest the heart which you would only bend should break.

Finale.

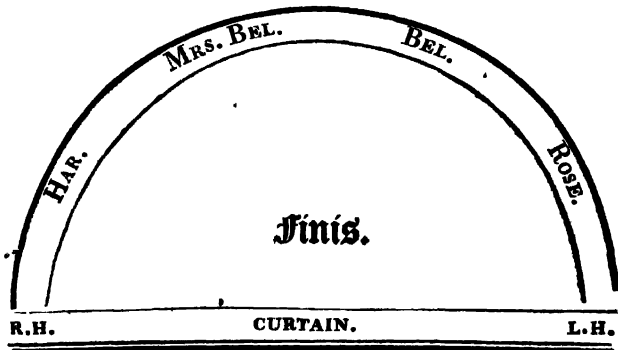
Mrs. BELMOUR, HARRIET, and ROSE.

*Then learn ye from this, each indifferent spouse,
'Tis in vain of your passion to tell us;
We ne'er can believe in the truth of your vows,
If our charms cannot render you jealous.*

BELMOUR.

*Then learn ye from this, each indifferent spouse,
What the women determine to tell us;
They ne'er can believe in the truth of our vows,
If their charms cannot render us jealous.*

Disposition of the Characters when the Curtain falls.





Orberry's Edition.

ALEXANDER THE GREAT,

A TRAGEDY.

By Nathaniel Lee.

THE ONLY EDITION EXISTING WHICH IS FAITHFULLY MARKED WITH
THE STAGE BUSINESS, AND STAGE DIRECTIONS,

AS IT IS PERFORMED AT THE

Theatres Royal.

LONDON

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Remarks.

.

It has been thought by an eminent critic, that taste depends upon fixed principles, and is reducible to a certain standard; eloquently as this argument has been urged, we are far from being converts to it; that which is the beauty of one country, is not the beauty of another, nor is there one general exciting cause of pleasurable sensations. *Habit*, and that powerful organ, the *association* of ideas, determine in most cases the tendency, as well as quantity of our feeling; that which being seen for the first time, gives pain, will never afterwards occur as an object of beauty. We may indeed admire the rich colours of a snake, though a snake has stung us, but this arises from a long predetermined habit of considering brilliant colours as beautiful, when properly blended, a habit accompanied by so many pleasing associations, as to completely overbalance the single idea of pain. Nor is it difficult to say why brilliancy of colour is thus delightful, for it is always connected with the idea of light, and light again is associated with that of buoyant spirits, and health, and happiness. Why the breath of morning with its attendant brightness, has this power, is a point not necessary to the present question; it is enough for our purpose, that it is so; sickness feels more healthy, and health more freshly at the rise of a new day, and so strongly and intimately is this idea mixed up with all our feelings, that its corresponding associations are ever most delicious.

. In considering taste, with reference to the drama, the difficulties redouble on all sides; for instance, that will appear farcical . exaggeration to some, which to others is the highest flight of inspired genius, and that again will seem puerility to one sort of

mind, which to another looks beautiful simplicity: where then is the one immutable standard, by which we are to measure our opinions? Is it nature?—If not, what is it?—And if it be, how are we to employ it?—All do not see nature and her various works, with the same eyes; our modes of perception are as different as our bodies; to one sight the tulip is most agreeable, to another the rose; one prefers the calm of evening, another the glow of day; and most allow that a long continued level is deformity; yet the plain is as much the work of nature as the mountain, and consequently, if nature be the measure of appeal, both are beautiful alike. Again, we find the ear of one man is tremblingly alive to harmony, the eye of another is no less sensitive of external objects, but still they cannot feel together; there is no common standard to which either party can refer.

We rest our argument upon these visible and obvious points, to be the more easily understood, for if we were once to come to the discussion of mental qualities, which, after all, is the proper mode of treating the question, it would be entangled in the mazes of metaphysics, and require more attention than most readers would be willing to bestow; nor should we have gone thus far, but to meet the objections of those who have challenged us with undue severity, because our sentences have not always kept pace with their predilections. Still we think as humbly of criticism as any of our readers can, fully aware that it is neither more nor better than the servant of poesy, and sometimes a very impudent one, who throws off his livery, and, upon the strength of a fine coat, assumes the gentleman, and would dictate to his master. In truth, poesy cannot be judged by rule; its appeal is to the heart and to the imagination, and whatever affects them, may safely laugh to scorn the severity of the critic.—Happy that it is so!—for even sense may err, and in that error would otherwise destroy; while ignorance and malice would crush to earth every blossom of rising genius. For ourselves, we may sin in ignorance, but never can in malice; if our bow be feeble, at least its shafts have not been poisoned: we have combated what we thought to be wrong with fair weapons; neither bribed by friendship to approve, nor by enmity to censure; and if sometimes our opinions have been too warmly urged, at least

we have not masked ourselves in the tyranny of dogmatism, but scrupulously given the principles of our decisions, so that the reader could never have been deceived. Many are juggled into ill-opinion of good things, by pointed sentences, and polished ridicule. they are appeals to the fancy; but argument is a cold application to the understanding, and very rarely leads any one astray; for it is always easier to detect the fallacies of reasoning, than of ridicule or satire.

Of "Alexander the Great," little that is favourable can be said; the poetry is of a very ordinary kind,—poor in its phraseology, barren in images, and measured out in one unvarying tune, that is any thing but good; and if it were good, would be disagreeable, from its constant recurrence. That union of different feelings and different actions, which makes up character, and which occurs so abundantly in Shakspeare's plays, is not to be found here at all; but, perhaps, we shall be better understood by explaining effects than causes.—Shakspeare presents each of his characters in so many different points of view, he shows them in such various lights, and under such opposite relations, that we seem to have had a long and intimate acquaintance with them, we know them to the very bottom of their hearts; we have learnt the complexion of their most secret thoughts; their virtues and vices, their acts and their feelings are as familiar to us as the spot of earth on which our infancy dwelt, and whose several objects seem to have grown up with us. This acquaintance with their minds and deeds, has made their forms and faces equally well known to us.—Who is not familiar with the dark eye and curling lip of *Iago*, or the melancholy, yet eloquent features of the *Prince of Denmark*? Who does not see in his mind's eye, the gay *Mercutio*, or the broken-hearted *Lear*? This is the great charm with Shakspeare; his characters, whether good or bad, are all our old acquaintance, in whom we therefore must feel an interest—not so with LEE—*Alexander* and *Clytus*, and *Parisatus*, and the rest of the *Dramatis Personæ*, pass too rapidly and too indistinctly before us, more like shadows than substances; at best they are but the acquaintance of a single half hour, tolerably agreeable, perhaps, but from the shortness of their visit, and the monotonous tone of their conversation, we know no-

thing of them. *Clytus* shows himself a rough soldier, and *Alexander* says he is a hero—that is all—the poet has not gone a step beyond, and when we allow them so much, his admirers have no reason to tax us with injustice.

LEE, according to his biographers, was mad; but his madness was not the madness of inspiration; he has done little or nothing in his tragedy of “*Alexander*,” that should give it a place on the shelf with our noble dramatists. His story forced upon him several situations, that in the hands of a poet would have been exquisitely beautiful and pathetic. The death of *Clytus*, dispelling the fumes of pride and intoxication in *Alexander*, was a point full of capabilities; the very vices of such a character are splendid, for they are full of energy, and his remorse might surely have been most touchingly sublime. The anguish of the tender *Statira*, cut off from life in the very minute of expected enjoyment, is no less so; and perhaps still more the loves of *Parisatis* and *Lysimachus*. But the genius of LEE sunk beneath the burthen:—a disordered imagination is not perforce a powerful one; on the contrary, it lays hold on one single idea, on which it dwells, to the exclusion of all others; and so with him; he had no power to go out of himself, to embody other characters, and just as little to cull and assimilate the beauties of nature, and apply them to the purposes of the poesy. Some worthy selections might indeed be made from his “*Alexander the Great*;” but a few shining passages do not make a play. Perhaps the following lines of the Macedonian hero, upon the death of *Statira*, are among the best, if not in truth, the best.—

“ ———— She’s gone! She’s gone!
 All, all is hush’d!—No music now is heard;
 The roses wither! and the fragrant breath
 That wak’d their sweets, shall never wake ’em more.”

A. 5. S. 1.

NATHANIEL LEE was the son of Dr. Lee, minister of Hatfield. He received his first rudiments of learning at Westminster, from whence he went to Trinity College, Cambridge, where he was admitted on the foundation in 1668. He commenced B. A. the same year; but, not succeeding to a fellowship, he tried to push his for-

tune at court. Failing in this attempt, he tried his talents on the stage; and, in the year 1672, made his appearance at the Duke's Theatre, in the character of *Duncan*, in Davenant's alteration of "Macbeth." In 1675 his first play appeared. In 1684, on the 11th of November, he was taken to Bedlam, where he continued four years. He had, however, the good fortune to recover the use of his reason, so far as to be discharged from his melancholy confinement; but he did not long survive his enlargement. Returning one night through Clare-market, overladen with wine, he fell down on the ground, as some say; according to others, on a hulk, and was killed, or stifled in the snow. He was buried in the parish church of St. Clement's Danes, aged about thirty-five years. His dramatic pieces are:—

Nero, Emperor of Rome. T.—Sophonisba; or, Hannibal's Overthrow. T.—Gloriana; or, the Court of Augustus Cæsar. T.—The Rival Queens; or, the Death of Alexander the Great. T.—Mithridates, King of Pontus. T.—Theodosius; or, the Force of Love. T. Cæsar Borgia. T.—Lucius Junius Brutus. T.—Constantine the Great. T.—The Princess of Cleve. T. C.—The Massacre of Paris. T.

Besides the above tragedies, he was concerned with Dryden in writing the "Duke of Guise," and "Œdipus."

PROLOGUE.

Written by Sir Carr Scroop, Bart.

How hard the Fate is of the scribbling Drudge,
Who writes to all, when yet so few can judge !
Wit, like religion, once divine was thought ;
And the dull crowd believ'd as they were taught ;
Now each fanatick fool presumes t'explain
The text, and does the sacred writ profane .
For while your wits each others fall pursue,
The fops usurp the power belongs to you.
You think y' are challeng'd in each new play-bill,
And here you come for trial of your skill ;
Where, Fencer like, you one another hurt,
While with your wounds you make the rabble sport.
Others there are that have the brutal will
To murder a poor play, but want the skill.
They love to fight, but seldom have the wit
To spy the place where they may thrust and hit ;
And therefore, like some bully of the town,
Ne'er stand to draw, but knock the poet down.
With these, like hogs in gardens, it succeeds,
They root up all, and know not flowers from weeds.
As for you, sparks, that hither come each day,
To act your own and not to mind our play ;
Rehearse your usual follies to the pit,
And with loud nonsenese drown the stage's wit ;
Talk of your clothes, your last debauches tell,
And witty bargains to each other sell ;
Glout on the silly she, who for your sake
Can vanity and noise for love mistake ;
'Till the coquet sung in the next lampoon
Is by her jealous friends sent out of town.
For, in this duelling, intriguing age,
The love you make is like the war you wage :
Y'are still prevented e'er you come t'engage.
But 'tis not to such trifling foes as you,
The mighty Alexander deigns to sue ;
Ye Persians of the pit he does despise,
But to the men of sense for aid he flies ;
On their experienc'd arms he now depends,
Nor fears he odds, if they but prove his friends .
For as he once a little handful chose,
The numerous armies of the world t'oppose,
So back'd by you, who understood the rules,
He hopes to rout the mighty host of fools.

Costume.

ALEXANDER.

Scarlet velvet robe; buff and scarlet vest; buff lambrokeens; flesh legs and arms; the dress elegantly embroidered and studded with steel ornaments; helmet, with laurels.

CLYTUS.

Russet sandals; flesh legs and arms; vest and lambrokeens.

CASSANDER.

Ibid.

LYSIMACHUS.

Ibid.

HEPHESTION.

Ibid.

POLYPERCHON.

Ibid.

THESSALUS.

Ibid.

PERDICCAS.

Ibid.

EUMENES.

Ibid.

ARISTANDER.

Ibid.

ROXANA.

White cloth dress and robe, richly trimmed with gold.

STATIRA.

White satin dress, with silver border; leno robe, spangled with silver.

PARISAIS.

Spangled dress, blue velvet robe; spangled border.

SYGAMBIS.

White satin dress, trimmed with silver; spangled leno upper short dress; orange velvet robe, trimmed with silver.

Ladies and Chorus, in white dresses.

PERSONS REPRESENTED.

	<i>Drury-lane.</i>	<i>Covent-garden.</i>
<i>Alexander</i>	Mr. Kean.	Mr. C. Kemble.
<i>Clytus</i>	Mr. Pope.	Mr. Egerton.
<i>Cassandra</i>	Mr. Bengough.	Mr. Barrymore.
<i>Lysimachus</i>	Mr. Wallack.	Mr. Abbott.
<i>Hephestion</i>	Mr. Barnard.	Mr. Connor.
<i>Polyperchon</i>	Mr. R. Phillips.	Mr. Claremont.
<i>Thessalus</i>	Mr. Coveney.	Mr. Chapman.
<i>Perdiccas</i>	Mr. Kent.	Mr. J. Matthews.
<i>Eumenes</i>	Mr. Cooke.	Mr. King.
<i>Aristander</i>	Mr. Miller.	Mr. Jefferies.
<i>Slave</i>	Mr. Ebsworth.	Mr. Norris.
<i>Roxana</i>	Mrs. Bartley.	Mrs. Egerton.
<i>Statira</i>	Mrs. Robinson.	Mrs. Faucit.
<i>Parisatis</i>	Miss Ivers.	Mrs. Capell.
<i>Sysigambis</i>	Mrs. Brereton.	Miss Logan.

The time this piece takes in representation is about two hours and forty-eight minutes. The first act occupies the space of thirty minutes—the second, thirty—the third, twenty-eight—the fourth, thirty-five—the fifth, forty-five.—Half-price commences, generally, at a quarter before nine o'clock..

Stage Directions.

By R. H.	is meant.	Right Hand.
L. H.		Left Hand.
S. E.		Second Entrance.
U. E.		Upper Entrance.
M. D.		Middle Door.
D. F.		Door in Flat.
R. H. D.		Right Hand Door.
L. H. D.		Left Hand Door.

ALEXANDER THE GREAT.

ACT I.

SCENE I.—*Alexander's Camp before Babylon.*

*Enter HEPHESTION and LYSIMACHUS, fighting,
L.H.U.E.—CLYTUS parting them.*

Cly. What, are you madmen? This a time for quarrel?

Put up, I say, or by the gods that form'd me,
He who refuses, makes a foe of Clytus.

Lys. I have his sword.

Cly. But must not have his life.

Lys. Must not, old Clytus!

Cly. Hair-brain'd boy, you must not.

Heph. Lend me thy sword, thou father of the war,
Thou far-fam'd guard of Alexander's life.

Curse on this weak, unexecuting arm!

Lend it, old Clytus, to redeem my fame;

Lysimachus is brave, and else will scorn me.

Lys. There, take thy sword, and since thou'rt bent
on death,

Know, 'tis thy glory that thou dy'st by me.

Cly. Stay thee, Lysimachus; Hephestion, hold;

Bar you both; my body interpos'd;

Now let me see which of you dares to strike.

By Jove, you've stirr'd the old man!—that rash arm
That first advances moves against the gods,
And our great king, whose deputy I stand.

Lys. Some prop'rer time must terminate our quarrel.

Heph. And cure the bleeding wounds my honour bears.

Cly. Some prop'rer time! 'tis false—no hour is proper;

No time should see a brave man do amiss.

Say, what's the noble cause of all this madness?

What vast ambition blows the dangerous fire?

Why a vain, smiling, whining, coz'ning woman.

By all my triumphs! in the heat of youth,

When towns were sack'd, and beauties prostrate lay,

When my blood boil'd, and nature work'd me high,

Clytus ne'er bow'd his body to such shame;

I knew 'em, and despis'd their cobweb arts:

The whole sex is not worth a soldier's thought.

Lys. Our cause of quarrel may to thee seem light;
But know, a less has set the world in arms.

Cly. Yes, Troy, they tell us, by a woman fell:

Curse on the sex, they are the bane of virtue!

Death! I'd rather this right arm were lost,

'Than that the king should hear of your imprudence—

What! on a day thus set apart for triumph!

Lys. We were, indeed, to blame.

Cly. This memorable day!

When our hot master, whose impatient soul

Outrides the sun, and sighs for other worlds

To spread his conquests, and diffuse his glory;

Now bids the trumpet for awhile be silent,

And plays with monarchs, whom he us'd to drive;

Shall we, by broils, awake him into rage,

And rouse the lion, that has ceas'd to roar?

Lys. Clytus, thou'rt right—put up thy sword, Hephestion:

Had passion not eclips'd the light of reason,

Untold, we might this consequence have seen.

Heph. Why has not reason power to conquer love?

Why are we thus enslav'd ?

Chy. Because unmann'd ;

Because ye follow Alexander's steps.

Heav'ns ! that a face should thus bewitch his soul,

And ruin all that's great and godlike in it.

Talk be my baue, yet the old man must talk ;

Not so he lov'd, when he at Issus fought,

And join'd in mighty combat with Darius,

Whom, from his chariot, flaming all with gems,

He hurl'd to earth, and catch'd th' imperial crown.

'Twas not the shaft of love perform'd that feat ;

He knew no cupids then. Now mark the change

A brace of rival queens embroil the court ;

And, while each hand is thus employ'd in beauty,

Where has he room for glory ?

Heph. In his heart.

Chy. Well said, young minion !—I, indeed, forgot
To whom I spoke—but Sysigambis comes :

Now is your time, for with her comes an idol

That claims your homage—I'll attend the king.

[*Exit Chylus, R.H.*]

Enter SYSIGAMBIS, with a letter, and PARISATIS, L.H.

Sys. Why will you wound me with your fond complaints,

And urge a suit that I can never grant ?

You know, my child, 'tis Alexander's will ;

He demands you for his lov'd Hephestion.

To disobey him might inflame his wrath,

And plunge our house in ruins yet unknown.

Par. To soothe this god, and charm him into temper,

Is there no victim ; none but Parisatis ?

Must I be doom'd to wretchedness and woe,

That others may enjoy the conqueror's smiles ;

Oh ! if you ever lov'd my royal father—

And sure you did, your gushing tears proclaim it—

Let still his name be dear, have pity on me !

He would not thus have forc'd me to despair ;

Indeed he would not.—Had I beg'd him thus,
He would have heard me, e'er my heart was broke.

Sys. When will my suff'rings end! O when, ye
gods!

For sixty rolling years, my soul has stood
The dread vicissitudes of fate unmov'd :
I thought 'em your decrees, and therefore yielded.
But this last trial, as it springs from folly,
Exceeds my suff'rance, and I must complain.

Lys. (*Lys. advances L.H. Heph. R.H.*) When Sysi-
gambis mourns, no common woe
Can be the cause—'tis misery, indeed.
Yet, pardon, mighty queen, a wretched prince,
Who thus presumes to plead the cause of love :
Beyond my life, beyond the world, (*kneeling*)
prize

Fair Parisatis—Hear me, I conjure you !
As you have authoriz'd Hephestion's vows,
Reject not mine ; grant me but equal leave
To serve the princess, and let love decide.

Heph. A blessing like the beauteous Parisatis
Whole years of service, and the world's wide empire,
With all the blood that circles in our veins,
Can never merit ; therefore, in my favour,
I beg'd the king to interpose his int'rest ;
Therefore, I beg'd your majesty's assistance ;
Your word is pass'd, and all my hopes rest on't.

Lys. (*Rising.*) Perish such hopes ! for love's a gen'
rous passion,
Which seeks the happiness of her we love,
Beyond th' enjoyment of our own desires ;
Nor kings, nor parents here have ought to do.
Love owns no influence, and disdains controul ;
Let 'em stand neuter—'tis all I ask.

Heph. Such arrogance, did Alexander woo,
Would lose him all the conquests he has won.

Lys. To talk of conquests well becomes the man
Whose life and sword are but his rival's gift.

Sys. It grieves me brave Lysimachus, to find
My power fall short of my desires to serve you ;

You know Hephestion first declar'd his love,
 And 'tis as true, I promis'd him my aid.
 Your glorious king, his mighty advocate,
 Became himself an humble suppliant for him.
 Forget her, prince, and triumph o'er your passion :
 A conquest worthy of a soul like thine.

Lys. Forget her, madam ! sooner shall the sun
 Forget to shine, and tumble from his sphere.
 Farewell, great queen—my honour now demands
 That Alexander should himself explain
 That wond'rous merit which exalts his fav'rite,
 And casts Lysimachus at such a distance.

[*Exit Lysimachus, L.H.*]

Sys. In this wild transport of ungovern'd passion
 Too far, I fear, he will incense the king.
 Is Alexander yet, my lord, arriv'd ?

Heph. Madam, I know not, but Cassander comes,
 He may, perhaps, inform' us.

Sys. I would shun him.
 Something there is, I know not why, that shocks me ;
 Something my nature shrinks at, when I see him.

[*Exeunt R.H.*]

Enter CASSANDER, L.H.

Cas. The face of day now blushes scarlet deep :
 Now blackens into night. The low'ring sun,
 As if the dreadful business he foreknew,
 Drives heavily his sable chariot on.
 All nature seems alarm'd for Alexander.—
 Why, be it so. Her pangs proclaim my triumph.
 A mad Chaldean, with a flaming torch
 Came to my bed last night, and bellowing o'er me,
 Well had it been, for Babylon, he cried,
 If curst Cassander never had been born.

Enter THESSALUS, R.H. with a packet.

How now, dear Thessalus, what packet's that ?

Thes. From Macedon, a trusty slave just brought it.

Your father chides us for our cold delay ;
 He says, Craterus, by the king's appointment,
 Comes, in his room, to govern Macedon,
 Which nothing but the tyrant's death can hinder :
 Therefore he bids us boldly strike at once,
 Or quit our purpose, and confess our fears.

Cas. Is not his fate resolved ?—this night he dies ;
 And thus my father but forestalls my purpose.
 How am I slow then ?—if I rode on thunder,
 Wing'd as the light'ning, it would ask some moments,
 Ere I could blast the growth of this Colossus.

Thes. Mark where the haughty Polyperchon comes !
 Some new affront by Alexander given,
 Swells in his heart, and stings him into madness.

Cas. Now, now's our time ; he must, he shall be
 ours :
 His haughty soul will kindle at his wrongs,
 Blaze into rage, and glory in revenge.

Enter POLYPERCHON, L.H.

Poly. Still as I pass, fresh murmurs fill my ears ;
 All talk of wrongs, and mutter their complaints.
 Poor soul-less reptiles !—their revenge expires
 In idle threats—the fortitude of cowards !
 'Their province is to talk ! 'tis mine to act,
 And show this tyrant, when he dar'd to wrong me,
 He wrong'd a man whose attribute is vengeance.

Cas. All nations bow their heads with servile ho-
 mage,
 And kiss the feet of this exalted man.
 The name, the shout, the blast from ev'ry mouth
 Is Alexander ! Alexander stuns
 The list'ning ear, and drowns the voice of heav'n.
 The earth's commanders fawn like crouching spaniels ;
 And if this hunter of the barbarous world,
 But wind himself a god, all echo him,
 With universal cry.

Poly. I fawn, or echo him !
Cassander, no ! my soul disdains the thought !

Let eastern slaves, or prostituted Greeks
Crouch at his feet, or tremble if he frown.
When Polyperchon can descend so low,
False to that honour, which thro' fields of death,
I still have courted, where the fight was fiercest,
Be scorn my portion ; infamy my lot.

Thes. The king may doom me to a thousand tortures,

Ply me with fire, and rack me like Philotas,
Ere I shall stoop to idolize his pride.

Cas. Not Aristander, had he rais'd all hell,
Cou'd more have shock'd my soul, than thou hast done,
By the bare mention of Philotas' murder.
O Polyperchon ! how shall I describe it !
Did not your eyes rain blood to see the hero ?
Did not your spirits burst with smother'd vengeance,
To see thy noble fellow-warrior tortur'd ?
Yet, without groaning, or a tear, endure
The torments of the damn'd ? O death to think it !
We saw him bruise'd ; we saw his bones laid bare ;
His veins wide lanc'd, and the poor quiv'ring flesh
With fiery pincers from his bosom torn ;
Till all beheld where the great heart lay panting.

Poly. Yet all like statues stood !—cold, lifeless statues !

As if the sight had froze us into marble :
When, with collected rage, we should have flown
To instant vengeance on the ruthless cause,
And plung'd a thousand daggers in his heart.

Cas. At our last banquet, when the bowl had gone
The giddy round, and wine inflam'd my spirits ;
I saw Craterus and Hephestion enter
In Persian robes ; to Alexander's health
They largely drank ; and falling at his feet
With impious adoration thus address'd
Their idol god. Hail, son of thund'ring Jove !
Hail, first of kings ! young Ammon live for ever !
Then kiss'd the ground ; on which I laugh'd aloud,
And scoffing, ask'd 'em, why they kiss'd no harder :
Whereon the tyrant, starting from his throne,
Spurn'd me to earth, and stamping on my neck,

Learn thou to kiss it, was his fierce reply ;
While, with his foot, he press'd me to the earth,
Till I lay weltring in a foam of blood.

Poly. Thus when I mock'd the Persians that ador'd him,

He struck me on the face, swung me around,
And bid his guards chastize me like a slave.
But if he 'scape my vengeance, may he live,
Great as that god whose name he thus profanes,
And, like a slave, may I again be beaten,
Scoff'd as I pass, and branded for a coward.

Cas. There spoke the spirit of Calisthenes :
Remember, he's a man, his flesh as penetrable
As any girl's, and wounded too as soon ;
To give him death no thunders are requir'd.
Struck by a stone, young Jupiter has fall'n,
A sword has pierc'd him, and the blood has followed ;
Nay, we have seen an hundred common ailments
Bring this immortal to the gates of death.

Poly. O let us not delay the glorious business !
Our wrongs are great, and honour calls for vengeance.

Cas. This day exulting Babylon receives
The mighty robber—with him comes Roxana,
Fierce, haughty fair ! On his return from India,
Artful she met him in the height of triumph,
And by a thousand wiles at Susa kept him,
In all the luxury of eastern revels.

Poly. How bore Statira his revolted love ?
For, if I err not, e'er the king espous'd her,
She made him promise to renounce Roxana.

Thes. No words can paint the anguish it occasion'd ;
E'en Sysigambis wept, while the wrong'd queen
Struck to the heart, fell lifeless on the ground.

Cas. When the first tumult of her grief was laid,
I sought to fire her into wild revenge ;
And to that end, with all the art I could,
Describ'd his passion for the bright Roxana :
But tho' I could not to my wish inflame her,
Thus far, at least, her jealousy will help ;
She'll give him troubles that perhaps may end him,

And set the court in universal uproar.

But see she comes. Our plots begin to ripen.

Now every one disperse,

And, with a face of friendship, meet the king.

[*Exeunt, Cas. R.H. Poly. and Thes. L.H.U.E.*]

Enter SYSIGAMBIS, STATIRA, and PARISATIS, L.H.

Sta. O for a dagger, a draught of poison, flames!
Swell heart, break, break thou wretched stubborn thing.
Now, by the sacred fire, I'll not be held:
Pray give me leave to walk.

Sys. Is there no reverence to my person due?
Trust me, Statira, had thy father liv'd,
Darius wou'd have heard me.

Sta. O he's false.
This glorious man, this wonder of the world,
Is to his love, and ev'ry god foresworn.
O I have heard him breathe such ardent vows,
Out-weep the morning with his dewy eyes,
And sigh and swear the list'ning stars away.

Sys. Believe not rumour, 'tis impossible.
Thy Alexander is renown'd for truth;
Above deceit—

Sta. Away, and let me die.
Why, Alexander, why would'st thou deceive me!
Have I not kiss'd thy wounds with dying fondness,
Bath'd 'em in tears, and bound 'em with my hair!

Par. If man can thus renounce the solemn ties
Of sacred love, who wou'd regard his vows?

Sta. Regard his vows, the monster, traitor! Oh!
I will forsake the haunts of men, converse
No more with aught that's human; dwell with dark-
ness;

For since the sight of him is now unwelcome,
What has the world to give Statira joy?
Yet I must tell thee, perjur'd as he is,
Not the soft breezes of the genial spring,
The fragrant violet, or op'ning rose,

Are half so sweet as Alexander's breath :
 'Then he will talk—good gods how he will talk !
 He speaks the kindest words, and looks such things,
 Vows with such passion, and swears with such a grace,
 'That it is heav'n to be deluded by him. (*Crosses to A.H.*)

Sys. Her sorrows must have way.

Sta. Roxana then enjoys my perjur'd love ;
 Roxana clasps my monarch in her arms,
 Doats on my conqu'ror, my dear lord, my king.
 Oh 'tis too much ! by heav'n I cannot bear it !
 I'll die, or rid me of the burning torture.
 Hear me, bright god of day, hear ev'ry god.

Sys. Take heed, Statira ; weigh it well, my child,
 Ere desperate love enforces you to swear.

Sta. O fear not that, already have I weigh'd it ;
 And in the presence here of heav'n and you,
 Renounce all converse with perfidious man.
 Farewell ye cozeners of our easy sex !
 And thou the falsest of the faithless kind,
 Farewell for ever ! Oh, farewell ! farewell !
 If I but mention him the tears will flow.
 How cou'dst thou, cruel, wrong a heart like mine,
 Thus fond, thus doting, ev'n to madness, on thee !

Sys. Clear up thy griefs, thy Alexander comes,
 Triumphant in the spoils of conquer'd India ;
 'This day the hero enters Babylon.

Sta. Why, let him come : all eyes will gaze with
 rapture.
 All hearts will joy to see the victor pass,
 All but the wretched the forlorn Statira.

(*Crosses to centre.*)

Sys. Wilt thou not see him then ?

Sta. I swear, and heav'n be witness to my vow,
 (*Kneels.*)

Never from this sad hour, never to see,
 Nor speak, no, nor, if possible, to think
 Of Alexander more : this is my vow,
 And when I break it—

Sys. Do not ruin all !

Sta. May I again be perjured and deluded !
May furies rend my heart ! may lightnings blast me !

Sys. Recal, my child, the dreadful imprecation.

Sta. No, I will publish it through all the court ;
Then to the bow'rs of great Semiramis,
Retire for ever from the treacherous world.
There from man's sight will I conceal my woes,
And seek in solitude a calm repose :
Nor pray'rs nor tears, shall my resolves controul,
Nor love itself, that tyrant of the soul. [*Exeunt*, L.H.]

END OF ACT I.

ACT II.

SCENE I.—*A triumphal Arch at the Entrance
into Babylon.*

*Enter ALEXANDER in a Triumphal Car ; Trophies
and warlike Ensigns in procession before him ;
CLYTUS, HEPHESTION, LYSIMACHUS, CASSANDER,
POLYPERCHON, THESSALUS, EUMENES, Chorus of
Priests, Youths and Virgins, Guards, and Atten-
dants.*

*See the cong'ring hero comes,
Sound the trumpets, beat the drums ;
Sports prepare, the laurel bring,
Songs of triumph to him sing.*

*See the godlike youth advance ;
Breath the flute, and lead the dance ;
Myrtles wreath, and roses twine,
To deck the hero's brow divine,*

Heph. Hail, son of Jove! great Alexander, hail!

Alex. Rise all; and thou, my second self, my friend!
Oh my Hephestion! raise thee from the earth!
Come to my arms, and hide thee in my heart;
Nearer, yet nearer, else thou lov'st me not.

Heph. Not love my king! bear witness all ye powers,
And let your thunder nail me to the centre,
If sacred friendship ever burn'd more brightly!
Immortal bosoms can alone admit
A flame more pure, more permanent than mine.

Alex. Thou dearer to me than my groves of laurel!
I know thou lov'st thy Alexander more,
Than Clytus does the king.

Lys. Now for my fate!
I see that death awaits me—yet I'll on.
Dread sir, I court me at your royal feet.

Alex. Rise, my Lysimachus; thy veins and mine
From the same fountain have deriv'd their streams.
Rise to my arms, and let thy king embrace thee.
Is not that Clytus?

Cly. Your old faithful soldier.

Alex. Clytus, thy hand;—thy hand, Lysimachus;
Thus double-arm'd, methinks,
I stand tremendous as the Lybian god,
Who, while his priests and I quaff'd sacred blood,
Acknowledg'd me his son; my lightning thou,
And thou, my mighty thunder. I have seen
Thy glittering sword out-fly celestial fire;
And, when I've cry'd, begone, and execute,
I've seen him run swifter than starting hinds,
Nor bent the tender grass beneath his feet.

Lys. When fame invites, and Alexander leads,
Dangers and toils but animate the brave.

Cly. Perish the soldier, inglorious and despis'd,
Who starts from either, when the king cries—on!

Alex. Oh, Clytus! Oh, my noble veteran!
'Twas, I remember, when I pass'd the Granicus,
'Thy arm preserv'd me from unequal force;

When fierce Itanor and the bold Rhesaces,
Fell both upon me with two mighty blows,
And clove my temper'd helmet quite asunder ;
Then, like a god, flew Clytus to my aid ;
Thy thunder struck Rhesaces to the ground,
And turn'd with ready vengeance, on Itanor.

Cly. To your own deeds that victory you owe,
And sure your arms did never boast a nobler.

Alex. By heav'n, they never did : they never can .
And I am prouder to have pass'd that stream,
Than to have driven a million o'er the plain :
Can none remember ?—Yes, I know all must—
When glory, like the dazzling eagle stood
Perch'd on my beaver in the Granic flood ;
When fortune's self my standard trembling bore,
And the pale fates stood frightened on the shore ;
When each immortal on the billows rode,
And I myself appear'd the leading god.

Enter ARISTANDER, L.H.

Aris. Haste, first of hero's, from this fatal place ;
Far, far from Babylon, enjoy your triumph,
Or all the glories, which your youth has won,
Are blasted in their spring.

Alex. What mean thy fears ?
And why that wild distraction on thy brow ?

Aris. This morn, great king, I view'd the angry sky,
And, frighted at the direful prodigies,
To Orosmales for instruction flew ;
But, as I pray'd, deep-echoing groans I heard,
And shrieks, as of the damn'd that howl for sin.
Shock'd at the omen, while amaz'd I lay
In prostrate rev'rence on the trembling floor,
Thus spoke the god :
The brightest glory of imperial man,
The pride of nations, and the boast of fame,
Remorseless fate, in Babylon, has doom'd
To sudden and irrevocable ruin.

Alex. If heav'n ordains that Babylon must fall,
Can I prevent the immutable decree?

Enter PERDICCAS, L.H.

Per. Oh, horror! horror! Dreadful and portentous!

Alex. How now, Perdiccas! Whence this exclamation?

Per. As Meleager and myself, this morn,
Led forth the Persian horse to exercise,
We heard a noise as of a rushing wind;
When suddenly a flight of baleful birds,
Like a thick cloud, obscur'd the face of heav'n;
On sounding wings from diff'rent parts they flew,
Encount'ring met, and battled in the air;
Their talons clash'd, their beaks gave mighty blows,
And show'rs of blood fell copious from their wounds.

Alex. Though all the curtains of the sky were
drawn,
And the stars wink, young Ammon shall go on;
While my Statira shines, I cannot stray,
Love lifts his torch to light me on my way,
And her bright eyes create another day.

Lys. Vouchsafe, dread sir, to hear my humble suit,
A prince intreats it, and what's more, your kinsman.

Alex. A soldier asks it; that's the noblest claim.

Lys. For all the services my sword has done,
Humbly I beg the prince's Parisatis.

Alex. Lysimachus, no more—it is not well—
My word, you know, is to Hephestion given:
How dare you then—but let me hear no more on't.

Lys. At your command, to scale th' embattled wall,
Or fetch the gore-dy'd standard from the foe,
When has Hephestion flown with warmer zeal?
When did he leave Lysimachus behind?
'These I have done, for these were in my pow'r;
But when you charge me to renounce my love,
And from my thoughts to banish Parisatis,

Obedience there becomes impossible ;
Nature revolts, and my whole soul rebels.

Alex. It does, brave sir !—now hear me, and be dumb !

When, by my order, curst Calisthenes
Was as a traitor, doom'd to live in torments—
Your pity sped him in despite of me.
Think not I have forgot your insolence ;
No ; though I pardon'd it :—yet, if again
Thou dar'st to cross me with another crime,
The bolts of fury shall be doubled on thee.—
In the mean time—think not of Parisatis ;
For if thou dost—by the immortal Ammon !
I'll not regard that blood of mine thou shar'st,
But use thee as the vilest Macedonian.

Lys. I knew you partial, ere I mov'd my suit ;
Yet, know, it shakes not my determin'd purpose ;
While I have life and strength to wield a sword,
I never will forego the glorious claim.

Alex. Against my life !—ha ! traitor, was it so ?
'Tis said, that I am rash, of hasty humour ;
But I appeal to the immortal gods,
If ever petty, poor, provincial lord
Had temper like to mine ? My slave, whom I
Could tread to clay, dares utter bloody threats.

Cly. Forgive dread sir, the fervour of love :
The noble prince, I read it in his eyes,
Would die a thousand deaths to serve his king,
And justify his loyalty and truth.

Lys. I meant his minion there should feel my arm,
Love claims his blood, nor shall he live to triumph
In that destruction that awaits his rival.

Alex. I pardon thee, for my old Clytus' sake ;
But if once more thou mention thy rash love,
Or dar'st attempt Hephestion's precious life,
I'll pour such storms of indignation on thee,
Philota's rack, Calisthenes' disgrace,
Shall be delights, to what thou shalt endure

Cly. My lord, the aged queen, with Parisatis,
Come to congratulate your safe arrival.

Enter SYSIGAMBIS and PARISATIS, L.H.

Alex. Oh, thou, the best of women, Sysigambis,
Source of my joy, blest parent of my love !

Sys. In humble duty to the gods and you,
Permit us, sir, with gratitude to bow.
Through you the royal house of Persia shines,
Rais'd from the depth of wretchedness and ruin,
In all the splendour of imperial greatness.

Alex. To meet me thus, was generously done ;
But still there wants, to crown my happiness,
That treasure of my soul, my dear Statira :
Had she but come to meet her Alexander,
I had been blest indeed.

Cly. Now who shall dare
To tell him of the queen's vow ?

Alex. How fares
My love ?—Ha ! neither answer me ! all silent !
A sudden horror, like a bolt of ice,
Shoots to my heart, and numbs the seat of life.

Heph. I would relate it, but my courage fails me.

Alex. Why stand you all as you were rooted here ?
What, will none answer ? my Hephestion silent ?
If thou hast any love for Alexander ;
If ever I obliged thee by my care ;
When through the field of death my eye has watch'd
thee,

Resolve my doubts, and rescue me from madness.

Heph. Your mourning queen has no disease but
grief,

Occasioned by the jealous pangs of love.
She heard, dread sir, (for what can 'scape a lover
That you, regardless of your vows, at Susa,
Had to Roxana's charms resign'd your heart,
And revell'd in the joys you once forswore.

Alex. I own, the subtile sorceress, in my riot,
My reason gone, seduc'd me to her bed ;
But, when I wak'd, I shook the Circe off ;
Nor griev'd I less for that which I had done,

'Than when at 'Thais' suit, enrag'd with wine,
I set the fam'd Persepolis on fire.

Heph. Your queen Statira, in the rage of grief,
And agony of desp'rate love, has sworn,
Never to see your majesty again.

Alex. Oh, madam, has she, has Statira sworn
Never to see her Alexander more?

Par. With sorrow, sir, I heard the solemn vow;
My mother heard it, and in vain adjur'd her,
By every tender motive, to recall it.

Sys. But with that fierceness she resents her wrongs,
Dwells on your fault, and heightens the offence,
That I could wish your majesty forget her.

Alex. Ha, could you wish me to forget Statira?
The star which brightens Alexander's life,
His guide by day, and goddess of his nights!
I feel her now; she beats in every pulse,
'Throbs at my heart, and circles with my blood.

Sys. Have patience, sir, and trust to heav'n and me;
If my authority has any influence,
I will exert it, and she shall be yours.

Alex. Haste, madam, haste, if you would have me
live;

Fly, ere, for ever, she abjure the world,
And stop the sad procession. [*Exit Sysigambis*, L.H.]

Parisatis,
Hang thou about her; wash her feet with tears,
Nay, haste; the breath of gods and eloquence,
Of angels, go along with you. [*Exit Parisatis*, L.H.
Oh, my heart!

Lys. Now let your majesty, who feels the pangs
Of disappointed love, reflect on mine.

• *Alex.* Ha!

Cly. What, are you mad? Is this a time to plead?

Lys. The prop'rst time; he dares not now be par-
tial,

Lest heav'n, in justice, should avenge my wrongs,
And double ev'ry pang which he feels now.

Alex. Why dost thou tempt me thus to thy undoing?
Death thou shouldst have, were it not courted so:

But, know, to thy confusion, that my word,
 Like destiny, admits of no repeal :
 Therefore, in chains, shalt thou behold the nuptials
 Of my Hephestion. Guards, take him prisoner.
(The Guards sieze Lysimachus.)

Lys. Away, ye slaves, I'll not resign my sword,
 Till first I've drench'd it in my rival's blood.

Alex. I charge you kill him not ; take him alive :
 The dignity of kings is now concern'd,
 And I will find a way to tame this rebel.

Cly. Kneel—for I see rage lightning in his eyes.

Lys. I neither hope, nor will I sue for pardon ;
 Had I my sword and liberty again,
 Again I would attempt his favourite's heart.

Alex. Hence, from my sight, and bear him to a
 dungeon.

Perdiccas, give this lion to a lion.—

None speak for him ; fly ; stop his mouth, away.

[Exeunt Lysimachus, Perdiccas, and Guards, L.H.]

Cly. This comes of women—the result of love.
 Yet were I heated now with wine, I doubt
 I should be preaching in this fool's behalf.

Alex. Come hither, Clytus, and my friend Hephestion ;
 Lend me your arms ; for I am sick o' the sudden.
 I fear, betwixt Statira's cruel vows,
 And fond Roxana's arts, your king will fall.

Cly. Better the race of women were destroyed,
 And Persia sunk in everlasting ruin.

Heph. Look up, my lord, and bend not thus your
 head,
 As if you purpos'd to forsake the world,
 Which you have greatly won.

Alex. Wou'd I had not ;
 There's no true joy in such unwieldy fortune.
 Eternal gazers lasting troubles make ;
 All find my spots, but few observe my brightness.
 Stand from about me all, and give me air !

(They retire.)

Yes, I will shake this Cupid from my soul ;
 I'll fright the feeble god with wars alarms,
 Or drown his pow'r in floods of hostile blood.

Giant me, great Mars, once more in arms to shine,
 And break, like light'ning, through the embattl'd line;
 O'er fields of death to whirl the rapid car,
 And blaze amidst the thunder of the war,
 Resistless as the bolt that rends the grove;—
 Or greatly perish, like the son of Jove. [*Exeunt, R.H.*]

END OF ACT II.

ACT III.

SCENE I.—*A Square before the Palace.*

Trumpets sounding a dead march. LYSIMACHUS led
 Prisoner, PARISATIS, EUMENES, PERDICCAS, and
 Guards, R.H.

Par. Stay, my Lysimachus! a moment stay!
 Oh, whither art thou going?—hold a moment!
 Unkind! thou know'st my life was wrapt in thine,
 Why would'st thou then to worse than death expose
 me?

Lys. Oh, may'st thou live in joys without allay!
 Grant it, ye gods! a better fortune waits thee;
 Live and enjoy it—'tis my dying wish;
 While to the grave the lost Lysimachus
 Alone retires, and bids the world adieu.

Par. Even in that grave will Parisatis join thee;
 Yes, cruel man! not death itself shall part us;
 A mother's pow'r, a sister's soft'ning tears,
 With all the fury of a tyrant's frown,
 Shall not compel me to outlive thy loss.

Lys. Were I to live till nature's self decay'd,
 'This wond'rous waste of unexampled love
 I never could repay—Oh, Parisatis!
 'Thy charms might fire a coward into courage;
 How must they act, then, on a soul like mine?
 Defenceless, and unarm'd, I fight for thee,

And may, perhaps, compel th' astonish'd world,
 And force the king to own that I deserve thee.
 Eumenes, take the princess to thy charge ;
 Away, Perdiccas, all my soul's on fire.

[*Exeunt, Parisatis and Perdiccas, R.H. Lysimachus and Guards, L.H.*]

SCENE II.—*A Pavillion,*

Enter ROXANA and CASSANDER, R.H.

Rox. Deserted ! saidst thou ? for a girl abandon'd !
 A puny girl, made up of wat'ry elements !
 Shall she embrace the god of my desires,
 And triumph in the heart Roxana claims ?
 If I forget it, may'st thou, Jove, deprive me
 Of vengeance, make me the most wretched thing
 On earth, while living, and when dead, the lowest
 And blackest of the fiends !

Cas. Oh, nobly said !
 Just is the vengeance which inflames your soul ;
 Your wrongs demand it—but let reason govern ;
 This wild rage, else, may disappoint your aims.

Rox. Away, away, and give a whirlwind room ;
 Pride, indignation, fury, and contempt,
 War in my breast, and torture me to madness !

Cas. Oh, think not I would check your boldest
 flights ;
 No—I approve 'em, and will aid your vengeance.
 But, princess, let us choose the safest course,
 Or we may give our foes new cause of triumph,
 Should they discover, and prevent our purpose.

Rox. Fear not, Cassander, nothing shall prevent it ;
 Roxana dooms him, and her voice is fate.
 My soul, from childhood, has aspir'd to empire ;
 In early non-age I was us'd to reign
 Among my she-companions : I despis'd
 The trifling arts, and little wiles of women,
 And taught 'em, with an Amazonian spirit,

To wind the steed, to chase the foaming boar,
And conquer man, the lawless, charter'd savage.

(Crosses to R.H.)

Cas. Her words, her looks, her every motion fires
me !

Rox. But when I heard of Alexander's fame,
How, with a handful, he had vanquish'd millions,
Spoil'd all the East, and captive held our queens ;
While, like a god, unconquer'd by their charms,
With heav'nly pity he assuag'd their woes,
Dry'd up their tears, and sooth'd them into peace ;
I hung attentive on my father's lips,
And wish'd him tell the wond'rous tale again.
No longer pleasing were my former sports ;
Love had its turn, and all the woman reign'd.
Involuntary sighs heav'd in my breast,
And glowing blushes crimson'd on my cheek ;
E'en in my slumbers I have often mourn'd
In plaintive sounds, and murmur'd Alexander.

Cas. Curse on his name !—she doats upon him still.

Rox. At length this conqueror to Zogdia came,
And, cover'd o'er with laurels, storm'd the city :
But, Oh, Cassander ! where shall I find words
To paint the extatic transports of my soul !
When, midst a circle of unrivall'd beauties,
I saw myself distinguish'd by the hero !
With artless rapture I receiv'd his vows,
The warmest, sure, that ever lover breath'd,
Of fervent love, and everlasting truth.

Cas. And need you then be told, those times are
past ?

Statira now engrosses all his thoughts :
The Persian queen, without a rival, reigns
Sole mistress of his heart—nor can thy charms,
The brightest, sure, that ever woman boasted,
Nor all his vows of everlasting love,
Secure Roxana from disdain and insult.

Rox. Oh, thou hast rous'd the lion in my soul !
Ha ! shall the daughter of Darius hold him ?
No, 'tis resolv'd ; I will resume my sphere,

Or, falling, spread a general ruin round me,
 Roxana and Statira; they are names
 That must for ever jar, like clashing clouds,
 When they encounter, thunders must ensue.

(Crosses to L.H.)

Cas. Behold, she comes, in all the pomp of sorrow,
 Determin'd to fulfil her solemn vow! (They retire.)

Rox. Away, and let us mark th' important scene.

Enter STATIRA and SYSIGAMBIS, R.H.

Sys. Oh, my Statira, how has passion chang'd thee!
 Think, in the rage of disappointed love,
 If treated thus, and hurried to extremes,
 What Alexander may denounce against us;
 Against the poor remains of lost Darius.

Sta. Oh, fear not that! I know he will be kind,
 For my sake kind, to you and Parisatis:
 Tell him, I rail'd not at his falsehood to me,
 But with my parting breath spoke kindly of him;
 Tell him I wept at our divided loves,
 And, sighing, sent a last forgiveness to him.

Sys. No, I can ne'er again presume to meet him,
 Never approach the much-wrong'd Alexander,
 If thou refuse to see him—Oh, Statira!
 Thy aged mother, and thy weeping country,
 Claim thy regard, and challenge thy compassion:
 Hear us, my child, and lift us from despair.

Sta. Thus low, I cast me at your royal feet,
 To bathe them with my tears; or, if you please,
 I'll let out life, and wash 'em with my blood.
 But I conjure you not to rack my soul,
 Nor hurry my wild thoughts to perfect madness:
 Should now Darius' awful ghost appear
 And you, my mother, stand beseeching by,
 I would persist to death, and keep my vow.

Rox. This fortitude of soul compels my wonder.

(Aside.)

Sys. Hence, from my sight! ungrateful wretch,
 begone!

And hide thee where bright virtue never shone;
 For, in the sight of heaven, I here renounce,
 And cast thee off an alien to my blood.

[*Exeunt Sys. R.H. Cas. L.H.*

Rox. (*Advancing.*) Forgive, great queen, th' intrusion of a stranger;

With grief Roxana sees Statira weep;
 I've heard, and much applaud your fix'd resolve,
 To quit the world for Alexander's sake;
 And yet I fear, so greatly he adores you,
 That he will rather choose to die of sorrow,
 Than live for the despis'd Roxana's charms.

Sta. Spare, madam, spare your counterfeited fear;
 You know your beauty, and have prov'd its pow'r;
 Tho' humbly born, have you not captive held,
 In love's soft chains, the conqueror of the world?
 Away to libertines, and boast thy conquest;
 A shameful conquest!—In his hours of riot,
 When wine prevail'd, and virtue lost its influence,
 Then, only then, Roxana could surprise
 My Alexander's heart.

Rox. Affected girl,
 To some romantic grove's sequester'd gloom
 Thy sickly virtue wou'd, it seems, retire,
 To shun the triumphs of a favour'd rival.
 In vain thou fliest—for there, ev'n there I'll haunt thee;
 Plague thee all day, and torture thee all night:
 There shalt thou learn, in what extatic joys
 Roxana revels with the first of men;
 And, as thou hear'st the rapt'rous scene recited,
 With frantic jealousy thou'lt madly curse
 Thy own weak charms, that could not fix the rover.

Sta. How weak is woman! at the storm she shrinks,
 Dreads the drawn sword, and trembles at the thunder;
 Yet, when strong jealousy inflames her soul,
 The sword may glitter, and the tempest roar,
 She scorns the danger, and provokes her fate.
 Rival, I thank thee—Thou hast fir'd my soul,
 And rais'd a storm beyond thy pow'r to lay;

Soon shalt thou tremble at the dire effects,
And curse, too late, the folly that undid thee.

(*Crosses to L.H.*)

Rox. Sure the disdain'd Statira dares not mean it.

Sta. By all my hopes of happiness I dare :

And know, proud woman, what a mother's threats,

A sister's sighs, and Alexander's tears,

Could not effect, thy rival rage has done.

I'll see the king, in spite of all I swore,

Though curs'd, that thou may'st never see him more.

Enter ALEXANDER, HEPHESTION, CLYTUS, POLYPERCHON, THESSALUS, and EUMENES, L.H.

Alex. Oh, my Statira ! thou relentless fair !

Turn thine eyes on me—I would talk to them.

What shall I say to work upon thy soul ?

What words, what looks, can melt thee to forgiveness ?

Sta. Talk of Roxana, and the conquer'd ladies,

Thy great adventures, thy successful love,

And I will listen to the rapt'rous tale ;

But rather shun me, shun a desperate wretch,

Resign'd to sorrow, and eternal woe.

Alex. Oh ! I could die, with transport, die before
thee ;

Would'st thou but, as I lay convuls'd in death,

Cast a kind look, or drop a tender tear.

Rox. Am I then fall'n so low in thy esteem,

That for another thou would'st rather die,

'Than live for me?—How am I alter'd, tell me,

Since last at Susa, with repeated oaths,

You swore the conquest of the world afforded

Less joy, less glory, than Roxana's love ?

Alex. Take, take that conquer'd world, dispose of
crowns,

And canted out the empires of the globe ;

But leave me, madam, with repentant tears,

And undissembled sorrows, to atone

The wrongs I've offer'd to this injur'd excellence.

Rox. Yes, I will go, ungrateful as thou art !
 Bane to my life, and murd'rer of my peace,
 I will be gone ; this last disdain has cur'd me—
 But have a care—I warn you not to trust me ;
 Or, by the gods, that witness to thy perjuries,
 I'll raise a fire that shall consume you both,
 Tho' I partake the ruin. [*Exit Roxana*, L.H.]

Sta. Alexander !—Oh, is it possible ?
 Immortal gods ! can guilt appear so lovely ?
 Yet, yet I pardon, I forgive thee all.

Alex. Forgive me all !. Oh, catch the heavenly
 sounds,
 Catch 'em, ye winds, and, as you fly, disperse
 The rapt'rous tidings through the extended world,
 That all may share in Alexander's joy !

Sta. Yes, dear deceiver, I forgive thee all,
 But longer dare not hear thy charming tongue ;
 For while I hear thee, my resolves give way :
 Be therefore quick, and take thy last farewell ;
 Farewell, my love—Eternally farewell !

Alex. Go, then, inhuman, triumph in my pains,
 Feed on the pangs that rend this wretched heart ;
 For now 'tis plain you never lov'd.—Statira !—
 Oh, I could sound that charming, cruel name,
 Till the tir'd echo faint with repetition.
 Oh stay, my Statira ! (*Kneels.*)

I swear, my queen, I'll not outlive our parting :
 My soul grows still as death.—Say, wilt thou pardon :—
 'Tis all I ask ;—wilt thou forgive the transports
 Of a deep-wounded heart, and all is well ?

Sta. Rise ; and may heav'n forgive you, like Statira !

Alex. You are too gracious—Clytus, bear me hence.—
 When I am laid i' th' earth, yield her the world,—
 There's something here, that heaves as cold as ice,
 That stops my breath.—Farewell, farewell for ever !

Sta. Hold off, and let me run into his arms :
 My life, my love, my lord, my Alexander !
 If thy Statira's love can give thee joy,
 Revive, and be immortal as the gods.

Alex. Oh, let me press thee in my eager arms,
And strain thee hard to my transported breast!

Sta. But shall Roxana—

Alex. Let her not be nam'd.

Oh, how shall I repay you for this goodness?
And you, my fellow warriors, who could grieve
For your lost king? But talk of griefs no more;
The banquet waits, and I invite you all;
My equals in the throne, as in the grave,
Without distinction come, and share my joys.

Cly. Excuse me, sir, if I for once am absent.

Alex. Excuse thee, Clytus! None shall be excus'd.
All revel out the day, 'tis my command;
Gay as the Persian god, ourself will stand,
With a crown'd goblet in our lifted hand;
Young Ammon and Statira shall go round,
While antic measures beat the burthen'd ground,
And to the vaulted skies our trumpet's clangors sound.
[*Flourish of trumpets, and exeunt, L.H.*]

END OF ACT 'III.

ACT IV.

SCENE I.—*A Square before the Palace.*

Enter CLYTUS, HEPHESTION, and PERDICCAS, L.H.

Cly. Urge me no more; I hate the Persian dress:
Nor should the king be angry at the rev'rence
I owe my country—sacred are her customs,
And honest Clytus will to death observe 'em.
Oh! let me rot in Macedonian, rags,
Or, like Calisthenes, be cag'd for life,
Rather than shine in fashions of the east.

Per. Let me, brave Clytus, as a friend entreat you.

Heph. What virtue is there that adorns a throne,
Exalts the heart, and dignifies the man,
Which shines not brightly in our royal master ?
And yet perversely you'll oppose his will,
And thwart an innocent unhurtful humour.

Cly. Unhurtful ! Oh ! 'tis monstrous affectation,
Pregnant with venom, in its nature black,
And not to be excus'd !—Shall man, weak man,
Exact the rev'rence which we pay to heaven,
And bid his fellow-creatures kneel before him,
And yet be innocent ? Hephestion, no ;
The pride that lays a claim to adoration,
Insults our reason, and provokes the gods.

Per. Yet what was Jove, the god whom we adore ?
Was he not once a man, and rais'd to heaven
For gen'rous acts, and virtues more than human ?

Heph. By all his thunder, and his sov'reign pow'r,
I'll not believe the world yet ever felt
An arm like Alexander's—Not that god
You nam'd, though riding in a car of fire,
Could in a shorter space do greater deeds ;
Or more effectually have taught mankind
To bend submissive, and confess his sway.

Cly. I tell you, boy, that Clytus loves the king
As well as you, or any soldier here,
Yet I disdain to sooth his growing pride ;
The hero charms me, but the god offends.

Heph. Then go not to the banquet.

Cly. Why, I was bid,
Young minion, was I not, as well as you ?
I'll go, my friends, in this old habit, thus,
And laugh, and drink the king's health heartily ;
And while you, blushing, bow your heads to earth,
And hide them in the dust,—I'll stand erect,
Straight as a spear, the pillar of my country,
And be by so much nearer to the gods.

Heph. But see, the king appears.

*Enter ALEXANDER, STATIRA, THESSALUS, and Guards,
R.H. PARISATIS and EUMENES L.H.*

Par. Oh, gracious monarch !
Spare him, Oh, spare Lysimachus his life !
I know you will—the brave delight in mercy.

Alex. Shield me, Statira, shield me from her sorrows.

Par. Save him, Oh, save him, ere it be too late !
Speak the kind word, let not your soldier perish
For one rash action, by despair occasion'd.
I'll follow thus for ever on my knees ;
You shall not pass. Statira, Oh, intreat him !

Alex. Oh, madam ! take her, take her from about
me ;

Her streaming eyes assail my very soul,
And shake my best resolves. .

Sta. Did I not break
Through all for you ? Nay, now, my lord, you must.
By all th' obedience I have paid you long,
By all your passion, sighs, and tender looks,
Oh, save a prince, whose only crime is love !
I had not join'd in this bold suit, my lord,
But that it adds new lustre to your honour.

Alex. Honour ! what's that ? Has not Statira said
it ?—

Fly, Clytus, snatch him from the jaws of death,
And to the royal banquet bring him straight ;
Bring him in triumph, fit for loads of honour.

[Exeunt Clytus, Hephestion, and Parisatis, L.H.]

Sta. Why are you thus beyond expression kind ?
Oh, my lov'd lord ! my fond, my raptur'd heart,
By gratitude and love at once inflam'd,
With wild emotion flutters in my breast ;
Oh, teach it, then, instruct it how to thank you !

Alex. Excellent woman !

'Tis not in nature to support such joy.

Sta. Go, my best love ; unbend you at the banquet ;
Indulge in joy, and laugh your cares away ;
While, in the bowers of great Semiramis,

I dress your bed with all the sweets of nature,
And crown it, as the altar of our loves ;
Where I will lay me down, and softly mourn,
But never close my eyes till you return.

[*Exit Statira*, R.H.]

Alex. Is she not more than mortal can desire !
As Venus lovely, and as Dian chaste !
And yet, I know not why, our parting shocks me ;
A ghastly paleness sat upon her brow ;
Her voice, like dying echoes, fainter grew ;
And, as I wrung her by the rosy fingers,
Methought the strings of my great heart were crack'd.
What could it mean ? Forward Laomedon.

Enter ROXANA, CASSANDER, and POLYPERCHON, L.H.

Why, madam, gaze you thus ?

Rox. For a last look,

And to imprint the memory of my wrongs ;
Roxana's wrongs, on Alexander's mind.

Alex. On to the banquet.

[*Exeunt Alexander and his train*, L.H.]

Rox. Ha ! with such disdain !

So unconcern'd ! Oh, I could tear myself,
Him, you, and all the hateful world to atoms !

Cas. Still keep this spirit up, preserve it still,
And know us for your friends. We like your rage ;
'Tis lovely in you, and your wrongs require it.

Here, in the sight of heaven, Cassander swears,
Unaw'd by death, to second your revenge.
Speak but the word, and, swift as thought can fly,
The tyrant falls a victim to your fury.

Rox. Shall he, then, die ? Shall I consent to kill
him ?

I, that have lov'd him with that eager fondness,
Shall I consent to have him basely murder'd,
And see him clasp'd in the cold arms of death ?
Worlds should not tempt me to the deed of horror.

Poly. The weak fond scruples of your love might
pass,

Were not the empire of the world concern'd :
But, madam, think, when time shall teach his tongue,
How will the glorious infant, which you bear,
Arraign his partial mother, for refusing
To fix him on the throne, which here we offer ?

Cas. If Alexander lives, you cannot reign,
Nor will your child. Old Sysigambis plans
Your sure destruction. Boldly then prevent her;
Give but the word, and Alexander dies.

Poly Not he alone ; the Persian race shall bleed :
At your command, one universal ruin
Shall, like a deluge, overwhelm the eastern world,
Till gloriously we raise you to the throne.

Rox. But, till the mighty ruin be accomplish'd,
Where can Roxana fly th' avenging wrath
Of those who must succeed this godlike man ?

Cas. Would you vouchsafe in these expanded arms
To seek a refuge, what could hurt you here ?
Here you might reign, with undiminish'd lustre,
Queen of the East, and empress of my soul.

Rox. Disgrac'd Roxana ! whither art thou fallen ?
Till this curs'd hour I never was unhappy ;
There's not one mark of former majesty
To awe the slave that offers at my honour.

Cas. Impute not, madam, my unbounded passion
To want of rev'rence—I have lov'd you long.

Rox. Peace, villain, peace, and let me hear no
more.

Think'st thou I'd leave the bosom of a god,
And stoop to thee, thou moving piece of earth ?
Hence, from my sight, and never more presume
To meet my eyes ; for, mark me, if thou dar'st,
To Alexander I'll unfold thy treason ;
Whose life, in spite of all his wrongs to me,
Shall still be sacred, and above thy malice.

Cas. (*Kneels.*) By your own life, the greatest oath,
I swear,
Cassander's passion from this hour is dumb ;
And, as the best atonement I can make,
Statira dies, the victim of your vengeance

Rox. Cassander, rise ; 'tis ample expiation.
 Yes, rival, yes ; this night shall be thy last ;
 This night, I know, is destin'd for thy triumph,
 And gives my Alexander to thy arms.
 Oh, murd'rous thought !

Poly. The bow'rs of great Semiramis are made
 The scene of love ; Perdiccas holds the guard.

Cas. Now is your time, when Alexander revels,
 And the whole court re-echoes with his riot,
 To end her, and with her to end your fears.
 Give me but half the Zogdian slaves that wait you,
 And deem her dead : nor shall a soul escape
 That serves your rival, to disperse the news.

Rox. By me they die, Perdiccas and Statira ;
 Hence with thy aid, I neither ask nor want it ;
 But will myself conduct the slaves to battle.
 Were she to fall by any arm but mine,
 Well might she murmur, and arraign her stars.
 Rival, rejoice, and, pleas'd, resign thy breath,
 Roxana's vengeance grants thee noble death.

[*Exit Roxana*, L.H.]

Cas. All but her Jove, this Semele disdains.
 We must be quick—She may, perhaps, betray
 The great design, and frustrate our revenge.

Poly. Has Philip got instruction how to act ?

Cas. He has, my friend ; and, faithful to our cause,
 Resolves to execute the fatal order.

Bear him this phial ; it contains a poison
 Of that exalted force, that deadly nature,
 Should Æsculapius drink it, in an hour,
 For then it works, the god himself were mortal ;
 I drew it from Nonacri's horrid spring :
 Mix'd with his wine, a single drop gives death,
 And sends him howling to the shades below.

Poly. I know its power, for I have seen it try'd ;
 Pains of all sorts through every nerve and artery
 At once it scatters ; burns at once and freezes ;
 Till, by extremity of torture forc'd,
 The soul consent to leave her joyless home,
 And seek for ease in worlds unknown to this.

Cas. Now let us part :—with Thessalus and Philip
Haste to the banquet ; at his second call
Let this be given him, and it crowns our hopes.

[*Exit Polyperchon, L.H.*

Now, Alexander, now we shall be quits ;
Death for a blow is interest indeed. [*Exit, R.H.*

SCENE II.—*The Palace.*

ALEXANDER POLYPERCHON, CASSANDER, THESSALUS,
EUMENES, *Guards, &c. discovered at a Banquet.*—
A flourish of Trumpets, Drums, &c.

Alex. To our immortal health, and our fair queen's !—
All drink it deep ; and, while the howl goes round,
Mars and Bellona join to make us music ;
A hundred bulls be offer'd to the sun,
White as his beams ; speak the big voice of war ;
Strike all our drums, and sound our silver trumpets ;
Provoke the gods to follow our example
In bowls of nectar, and replying thunder.
(*Flourish of trumpets, drums, &c.*)

Enter CLYTUS, HEPHESTION, and LYSIMACHUS,
bloody, L.H.

Cly. Long live the king ; long live great Alexander ;
And conquest crown his arms with deathless laurels,
Propitious to his friends, and all he favours !

Alex. Did I not give command you should preserve
Lysimachus ?

Heph. Dread sir, you did.

Alex. What then
Portend these bloody marks ?

Heph. Ere we arriv'd,
Perdiccas had already plac'd the prince
In a lone court. all but his hands unarm'd.

Cly. On them were gauntlets ; such was his desire,
In death to shew the difference betwixt
The blood of Eacus, and common men.

Forth issuing from his den, amaz'd we saw
 'The horrid savage, with whose hideous roar
 'The palace shook ; his angry eye-balls glaring
 With triple fury, menac'd death and ruin.

Heph. With unconcern, the gallant prince advance'd ;

Now, Parisatis, be the glory thine,
 But mine the danger, were his only words ;
 For, as he spoke, the furious beast descried him,
 And rush'd, outrageous, to devour his prey.

Cly. Agile and vigorous, he avoids the shock
 With a slight wound ; and, as the lion turn'd,
 Thrust gauntlet, arm, and all, into his throat,
 And, with Herculean strength, tears forth his tongue ;
 Roaming and bloody, the disabled savage
 Sunk to the earth, and plough'd it with his teeth ;
 While, with an active bound, your conqu'ring soldier
 Leap'd on his back, and dash'd his scull in pieces.

Alex. By all my laurels, 'twas a godlike act ;
 And 'tis my glory, as it shall be thine,
 That Alexander could not pardon thee.
 Oh, my brave soldier, think not all the pray'rs
 And tears of the lamenting queens could move me
 Like what thou hast perform'd ! Grow to my breast.

Lys. Thus, self-condemn'd, and conscious of my
 guilt,
 How shall I stand such unexampled goodness ?
 Oh, pardon, sir, the transports of despair,
 The frantic outrage of ungovern'd love !
 E'en when I show'd the greatest want of reverence,
 I could have died with rapture in your service.

Alex. Lysimachus, we both have been transported ;
 But, from this hour, be certain of my heart.
 A lion be the impress of thy shield ;
 And that gold armour we from Porus won,
 Thy king presents thee—But thy wounds ask rest.

Lys. I have no wounds, dread sir ; or, if I had,
 Were they all mortal, they should stream unmind'd,
 When Alexander was the glorious health.

Alex. Thy hand, Hephestion. Clasp him to thy heart,

And wear him ever near thee. Parisatis
Shall now be his who serves me best in war.
Neither reply—but mark the charge I give—

Live, live as friends; you will, you must, you shall;—
’Tis a god gives you life.

Cly. Oh, monstrous vanity!

Alex. Ha! what says Clytus? who am I?

Cly. The son
Of good king Philip.

Alex. By my kindred gods,
’Tis false:—great Ammon gave me birth.

Cly. I’ve done.

Alex. Clytus, what means that dress? Give him a robe there.

Take it, and wear it.

Cly. Sir, the wine, the weather
Has heated me; besides, you know my humour.

Alex. Oh! ’tis not well! I’d rather perish, burn,
Than be so singular and froward.

Cly. So would I—
Burn, hang, or drown; but in a better cause.
I’ll drink, or fight, for sacred majesty
With any here. Fill me another bowl.
Will you excuse me?

Alex. You will be excus’d.
But let him have his humour; he is old.

Cly. So was your father, sir; this to his mem’ry!
Sound all the trumpets there.

Alex. They shall not sound
Till the king drinks. Sure, I was born to wage
Eternal war!—All are my enemies,
Whom I could tame—But let the sports go on.

Lys. Nay, Clytus, you that could advise so well—

Alex. Let him persist, be positive, and proud,
Envious and sullen ’mongst the nobler souls,
Like an infernal spirit that hath stol’n
From heav’n, and mingled with the inirth of gods.

Cly. When gods grow hot, no difference I know
 'Twixt them and devils—Fill me Greek wine : yet,
 Yet fuller ; I want spirits.

Alex. Let me have music.

Cly. Music for boys—Clytus would hear the groans
 Of dying soldiers, and the neigh of steeds ;
 Or, if I must be pester'd with shrill sounds,
 Give me the cries of matrons in sack'd towns.

Heph. Let us, Lysimachus, awake the king ;
 A heavy gloom is gathering on his brow.
 Kneel all, with humblest adoration, kneel,
 And let a health to Jove's great son go round.

Alex. Sound, sound, that all the universe may
 hear.

Oh, for the voice of Jove ! the world should know
 (*A loud flourish of Trumpets.*)

The kindness of my people.—Rise, Oh, rise !—
 My hands, my arms, my heart, are ever your's.

Cly. I did not kiss the earth, nor must your hand ;
 I am unworthy, sir.

Alex. Thou art, indeed !—

Thou enviest the great honour of thy master—
 Sit, all my friends—Now let us talk of war ;
 The noblest subject for a soldier's mouth ;
 And speak, speak freely, else you love me not ;
 Who, think you, was the greatest general
 That ever led an army to the field ?

Heph. A chief so great, so fortunately brave,
 And justly so renown'd as Alexander,
 The radiant sun, since first his beams gave light,
 Never yet saw.

Lys. Such was not Cyrus, nor the fam'd Alcides,
 Nor great Achilles, whose tempestuous sword
 Laid Troy in ashes, though the warring gods
 Oppos'd him.

Alex. Oh, you flatter me ! you flatter me !

Cly. They do, indeed ; and yet you love 'em for't,
 But hate old Clytus for his hardy virtue.—
 Come, shall I speak a man, with equal bravery,
 A better general, and experter soldier ?

Alex. Instruct me, sir; I should be glad to learn.

Cly. Your father, Philip.—I have seen him march
And fought beneath his dreadful banner, where
The boldest at this table would have trembled.
Nay, frown not, sir, you cannot look me dead.
When Greeks join'd Greeks, then was the tug of war,
The labour'd battle sweat, and conquest bled.
Why should I fear to speak a bolder truth,
Than e'er the lying priests of Ammon told you?
Philip fought men, but Alexander, women.

Alex. Proud spite, and burning envy, by the gods!
Is then my glory come to this at last,
To conquer women! Nay, he said, the stoutest,
The stoutest here would tremble at his dangers.
In all the sickness, all the wounds, I bore,
When, from my reins, the javelin's head was cut,
Lysimachus, Hephestion, speak, Perdiccas,
Did I once tremble?—Oh, the cursed falsehood!—
Did I once shake or groan? or act beneath
The dauntless resolution of a king?

Lys. Wine has transported him.

Alex. No, 'tis meer malice—
I was a woman too, at Oxydrace,
When, planting on the walls a scaling ladder,
I mounted, spite of show'rs of stones, bars, arrows,
And all the lumber which they thunder'd down;
When you, beneath, cried out, and spread your arms,
That I should leap among you—did I so?

Lys. Dread sir, the old man knows not what he says.

Alex. Was I a woman, when, like Mercury,
I leap'd the walls, and flew amidst the foe,
And, like a baited lion, dy'd myself
All over in the blood of those bold hunters;
Till, spent with toil, I battled on my knees,
Pluck'd forth the darts that made my shield a forest,
And hurl'd 'em back with most unconquer'd fury?—
Then, shining in my arms, I sunn'd the field,
Mov'd, spoke, and fought, and was myself a war.

Cly. 'Twas all bravado; for, before you leap'd,
I saw that I had burst the gates asunder.

Alex. Oh, that thou wert but young again, and vigorous,

That I might strike thee prostrate to the earth
For this audacious lie, thou feeble dotard !

Cly. I know the reason why you use me thus.
I sav'd you from the sword of bold Rhesaces,
Else had your godship slumber'd in the dust ;
And most ungratefully you hate me for it.

Alex. Hence from the banquet !—Thus far I forgive thee.

Cly. First try, for none can want forgiveness more,
To have your own bold blasphemies forgiven,
The shameful riots of a vicious life,
Philotas' murder——

Alex. Ha ! what said the traitor ?

Heph. Clytus, withdraw ; Eumenes, force him hence.

Cly. No, let him send me, if I must begone,
To Philip, Attalus, Calisthenes,
To great Parmenio, and his slaughter'd sons.

Alex. Give me a javelin.

Lys. Hold, mighty sir.

Alex. Sirrah ! Off,

Lest I at once strike through his heart and thine.
Begone to Philip, Attalus, Calisthenes ; (*Stabs him.*)
And let bold subjects learn, by thy example,
Not to provoke the patience of their prince. (*Clytus falls.*)

Cly. The rage of wine is drown'd in gushing blood.
Oh, Alexander ! I have been to blame ;
Hate me not after death ; for I repent,
That I so far have urg'd your noble nature.

Alex. What's this I hear ! Say on, my dying soldier.

Cly. I shou'd have kill'd myself, had I but liv'd
To be once sober ; but now I fall with honour ;
My own hands wou'd have brought foul death. Oh,
pardon. (*Dies.*)

Alex. Then I am lost ! What has my vengeance done !

Who is it thou hast slain ? Clytus !—what was he ?
The faithfullest subject, worthiest counsellor,

The bravest soldier ! He who sav'd thy life,
 Fighting bare-headed at the river Granick ;—
 For a rash word, spoke in the heat of wine,
 The poor, the honest Clytus thou hast slain ;
 Clytus, thy friend, thy guardian, thy preserver !

Heph. Remove the body, it inflames his sorrow.

Alex. None dare touch him ; we must never part.
 Cruel Hephestion and Lysimachus,
 That had the power, yet wou'd not hold me !—Oh !

Lys. Dear sir, we did.

Alex. I know ye did ; ye held me
 Like a wild beast, to let me go again
 With greater violence.—Oh, ye've undone me !
 Excuse it not,—you that cou'd stop a lion, (*To Lys.*)
 Cou'd not turn me?—ye should have drawn your swords,
 And barr'd my rage with their advancing points ;
 Made reason glitter in my dazzled eyes,
 Till I had seen the precipice before me :
 That had been noble, that had shewn the friend.
 Clytus wou'd so have done to save your lives.

Lys. When men shall hear how highly you were
 urg'd—

Alex. No ; you have let me stain my rising glory,
 Which else had ended brighter than the sun.
 Oh, I am all a blot, which seas of tears,
 And my heart's blood, can never wash away ;
 Yet 'tis but just I try, and on the point,
 Still reeking, hurl my black polluted breast.

Heph. Oh, sacred sir—it shall not—must not be.

Lys. Forgive, dread sir, forgive my pious hands,
 That dare, in duty, to disarm my master.

Alex. Yes, cruel men, ye now can shew your
 strength ;

Here's not a slave, but dares oppose my justice,
 Yet none had courage to prevent this murder.

But I will render all endeavours vain,
 That tend to save my life—Here will I lie,
 Close to my murder'd soldier's bleeding side,
 Thus clasping his cold body in my arms,
 Till death has clos'd my eyes, like his, for ever.

(*Throws himself on the body of Clytus.*)

Enter PERDICCAS, R.H.

Per. Treason! foul treason! Hephestion, where's the king?

Heph. There, by old Clytus' side, whom he hath slain.

Per. Rise, sacred sir, and haste to save the queen :
Roxana, fill'd with furious jealousy,
Came with a guard, unmark'd : she gain'd the bow'r,
And broke upon me with such sudden fury,
That all have perish'd who oppos'd her rage.

Alex. What says Perdicas? Is the queen in danger?

Per. Haste, sir, to your Statira, or she dies.

Alex. Thus from the grave I rise to save her life.—
All draw your swords, on wings of lightning move,
Young Ammon leads you, and the cause is love ;
When I rush on, sure none will dare to stay ;
'Tis beauty calls, and glory leads the way.
(*Flourish of Trumpets, Drums, &c.*)—[*Exeunt, R.H.*

END OF ACT IV.

ACT V.

SCENE I.—*The Gardens of Semiramis.*

STATIRA discovered asleep, on a Sofa.

Sta. Bless me, ye pow'rs above, and guard my virtue!
Where are you fled, dear shades? Where are you fled?
'Twas but a dream; and yet I saw and heard
My royal parents, who, while pious care
Sat on their faded cheeks, pronounc'd with tears,
Tears such as angels weep, this hour my last.

But hence with fear—my Alexander comes,
 And fear and danger ever fled from him.
 My Alexander!—Wou'd that he were here!
 For Oh, I tremble, and a thousand terrors
 Rush in upon me, and alarm my heart.

(Distant flourish of Trumpets.)

But hark, 'tis he, and all my fears are fled;
 My life, my joy, my Alexander comes.

Rox. (Within.) Make fast the gate with all its
 massy bars;

At length we've conquer'd this stupendous height,
 And reach'd the grove.

Sta. Ye guardian gods, defend me!
 Roxana's voice! 'Then all the vision's true,
 And die I must.

Enter ROXANA, L.H.

Rox. Secure the brazen gate.
 Where is my rival? 'tis Roxana calls.

Sta. And what is she, who, with such tow'ring pride,
 Wou'd awe a princess that is born above her?

Rox. Behold this dagger!—'Tis thy fate, Statira!
 Behold, and meet it as becomes a queen.

Fain wou'd I find thee worthy of my vengeance;
 Here, take my weapon then; and, if thou dar'st—

Sta. How little know'st thou what Statira dares!
 Yes, cruel woman! yes, I dare meet death

With a resolve, at which thy coward heart
 Wou'd shrink; for terror haunts the guilty mind;
 While conscious innocence, that knows no fear,
 Can smiling pass, and scorn thy idle threats.

Rox. Return, fair insolent! return, I say.
 Dar'st thou, presumptuous, to invade my rights?
 Restore him quickly to my longing arms,
 And with him give me back his broken vows,
 For perjur'd as he is, he still is mine,
 Or I will rend him from thy bleeding heart.

Sta. Alas, Roxana, 'tis not in my power;
 I cannot if I would—And, oh, ye gods,

What were the world to Alexander's loss !

Rox. Oh, sorceress, to thy accursed charms
I owe the frenzy that distracts my soul;
To them I owe my Alexander's loss.
Too late thou tremblest at my just revenge,
My wrongs cry out, and vengeance will have way.

(*Holds up the dagger.*)

Sta. Hold, hold, thy threat'ning hand advanc'd
in air.

I read my sentence written in thy eyes :
Yet, Oh, Roxana, on thy black revenge
One kindly ray of female pity beam,
And give me death in Alexander's presence.

Rox. Not for the world's wide empire should'st thou
see him
Fool ! but for him thou might'st unheeded live ;
For his sake only art thou doom'd to die.
The sole remaining joy that glads my soul,
Is to deprive thee of the heart I've lost.

(*Flourish of Trumpets.*)

Enter a Slave, L.H.

Slave. Madam, the king and all his guards are come ;
With frantic rage they thunder at the gate,
And must, ere this, have gain'd admittance.

[*Exit Slave, L.H.*

Rox. Ha !

Too long I've trifled ; let me then redeem
The time mispent, and make great vengeance sure.

Sta. Is Alexander, Oh, ye gods, so nigh,
And can he not preserve me from her fury ?

-Rox. Nor he, nor heav'n, shall shield thee from my
justice.

Die, sorc'ress, die, and all my wrongs die with thee.

(*Stabs her.*)

Alex. (Without.) Away, ye slaves, stand off !—

Quick let me fly

On lightning's wings ;—nor heav'n nor earth, shall
stop me.

*Enter ALEXANDER, LYSIMACHUS, CASSANDER, PER-
DICCAS, THESSALUS, Officers, and Guards, L.H.*

Ha !—Oh, my soul, my queen, my love, Statira !
'These wounds ! are these my promis'd joys ?

Sta. Alas !

My only love, my best and dearest blessing,
Wou'd I had died before you enter'd here ;
For thus delighted, while I gaze upon thee,
Death grows more horrid, and I'm loth to leave thee.

Alex. Thou shalt not leave me—Cruel, cruel stars !
Oh, where's the monster, where's the horrid fiend,
That struck at innocence, and murder'd thee ?

Rox. Behold the wretch, who, desperate of thy love,
In jealous madness gave the fatal blow.

Alex. To dungeons, tortures, drag her from my sight.

Sta. My soul is on the wing. Spare
Roxana's life.—'Twas love of you that caused
The death she gave me. And, Oh, sometimes think,
Amidst your revels, think on your poor queen ;
And, ere the chearful bowl salute your lips,
Enrich it with a tear, and I am happy. (*Dies.*)

Alex. Yet, ere thou tak'st thy flight—She's gone,
she's gone !

All, all is hush'd ; no music now is heard ;
'The roses wither ; and the fragrant breath
'That wak'd their sweets, shall never wake'em more.

Rox. Weep not, my lord ! no sorrow can recall her.
Oh, turn your eyes, and, in Roxana's arms,
You'll find fond love and everlasting truth.

Alex. Hence, from my sight, and thank my dear
Statira,
That yet thou art alive.

Rox. Yes, thus I'll fasten on your sacred robe ;
'Thus, on my knees, for ever cling around you,
'Till you forgive me, or till death divide us.

Alex. Hence, fury, hence : there's not a glance of
thine,
But, like a basilisk, comes wing'd with death.

Rox. Oh, speak not thus, to one who kneels for mercy.

Think, for whose sake it was I madly plung'd
Into a crime abhorrent to my nature.

Alex. Off, murd'ress, off! for ever shun my sight!
My eyes detest thee, for thy soul is ruin.

Rox. Barbarian! yes, I will for ever shun thee,
Repeated injuries have steel'd my heart,
And I cou'd curse myself for being kind.
If there is any majesty above,
That has revenge in store for perjur'd love,
Send, heav'n, the swiftest ruin on his head!
Strike the destroyer! lay the victor dead!
But what are curses? Curses will not kill,
Nor ease the tortures I am doom'd to feel.

[*Exit Roxana, L.H.*]

Alex. Oh, my fair star, I shall be shortly with thee!
What means this deadly dew upon my forehead?
My heart too heaves!—

Cas. The poison works!

Enter EUMENES, L.H.

Eume. Pardon, dread sir, a fatal messenger.
'The royal Sysigambis is no more.
Struck with the horror of Statira's fate,
She soon expir'd, and, with her latest breath,
Left Parisatis to Lysimachus.
But what, I fear, most deeply will affect you,
Your lov'd Hephestion's—

Alex. Dead! then he is bless'd!
But here, here lies my fate. Hephestion! Clytus!
My victories all for ever folded up
In this dear body. Here my banner's lost,
My standard's triumphs gone.—Oh, when, Oh, when,
Shall I be mad indeed?

[*Exeunt all but Cassander and Thessalus, L.H.*]

Cas. He's gone—but whither?—follow, Thessalus,
Attend his steps, and let me know what passes.

[*Exeunt Thessalus, L.H. and Cassander, R.H.*]

SCENE II.—*An Antichamber in the Palace.**Enter CASSANDER, R.H.*

Cas. Vengeance, lie still, thy cravings shall be sated.
 Death roams at large, the furies are unchain'd,
 And murder plays her mighty master-piece.

Enter POLYPERCHON, L.H.

Saw you the king? He parted hence this moment.

Poly. Yes; with disorder'd wildness in his looks,
 He rush'd along, till, with a casual glance,
 He saw me where I stood; then stopping short,
 Draw near, he cried—and grasp'd my hand in his,
 Where more than fevers rag'd in ev'ry vein.
 Oh, Polyperchon! I have lost my queen!
 Statira's dead!—and, as he spoke, the tears
 Gush'd from his eyes—I more than felt his pains.

Enter THESSALUS, L.H.

Thes. Hence, hence, away!

Cas. Where is he, Thessalus?

Thes. I left him circled by a crowd of princes,
 The poison tears him with that height of horror,
 E'en I could pity him—he call'd the chiefs;
 Embrac'd 'em round—then, starting from amidst 'em,
 Cried out, I come—'Twas Ammon's voice; I know it.
 Father, I come; but, let me, ere I go,
 Dispatch the business of a kneeling world.

Poly. No more—I hear him—we must meet anon.

Cas. In Saturn's field—there give a loose to rapture,
 Enjoy the tempest we ourselves have rais'd,
 And triumph in the wreck which crowns our ven-
 geance. [*Exeunt Cas. R.H. Poly. and Thes. L.H.*]

SCENE III.—*The Palace.*

ALEXANDER, LYSIMACHUS, EUMENES, PERDICCAS,
Officers, Guards, and Attendants, discovered.

Alex. Search there; nay, probe me; search my
 wounded reins—

Pull, draw it out.

Lys. We have search'd, but find no hurt.

Alex. Oh, I am shot!—a forked, burning arrow
 Sticks 'cross my shoulders; the sad venom flies,
 Like light'ning thro' my flesh, my blood, my marrow.

Lys. How fierce his fever!

Alex. Ha! what a change of torments I endure!
 A bolt of ice runs hissing through my bowels;
 'Tis, sure, the arm of death. Give me a chair;
 Cover me, for I freeze, and my teeth chatter,
 And my knees knock together.

Eume. Have mercy, heav'n!

Alex. Who talks of heav'n?

I burn, I burn again;—

The war grows wond'rous hot;—hey for the Tygris!
 Bear me, Bucephalus, amongst the billows.
 Oh, 'tis a noble beast; I wou'd not change him
 For the best horse the sun has in his stable;
 For they are hot, their mangers full of coals;
 Their manes are flakes of light'ning, curls of fire;
 And their red tails, like meteors, whisk about.

Lys. Help, all! Eumenes help.

Alex. Ha! ha! ha! I shall die with laughter.
 Parmenio, Clytus, do you see yon fellow,
 That ragged soldier, that poor tatter'd Greek?
 See how he puts to flight the gaudy Persians,
 With nothing but a rusty helmet on, through which
 The grisly bristles of his pushing beard
 Drive 'em like pikes—ha! ha! ha!

Per. How wild he talks!

Lys. Yet warring in his wildness.

Alex. Sound, sound ! keep your ranks close ; aye,
now they come.

Oh, the brave din, the noblest clank of arms !—
Charge, charge apace ; and let the phalanx move ;
Darius comes—aye, 'tis Darius :
I see, I know him by the sparkling plumes,
And his gold chariot, drawn by ten white horses :
But, like a tempest, thus I pour upon him—
He bleeds ; with that last blow I brought him down :
He tumbles, take him, snatch the imperial crown.
They fly, they fly ; follow, follow : Victoria,
Victoria, Victoria—(*Throws himself into the arms of
the Soldiers.*)

Per. Let's bear him softly to his bed.

Alex. Hold ; the least motion gives me sudden
death ;

My vital spirits are quite parch'd, burnt up,
And all my smoky entrails turn'd to ashes.

Lys. When you, the brightest star that ever shone,
Shall set, it must be night with us for ever.

Alex. Let me embrace you 'all, before I die.—
Weep not, my dear companions ; the good gods
Shall send ye in my stead a nobler prince,
One that shall lead ye forth with matchless conduct.

Lys. Break not our hearts with such unkind expres-
sions.

Per. We will not part with you, nor change for
Mars.

Alex. Perdicas, take this ring,
And see me laid in the temple of Jupiter Ammon.

Lys. To whom does your dread majesty bequeath
The empire of the world ?

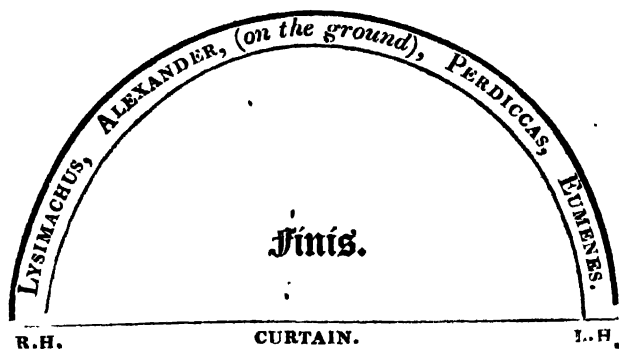
Alex. To him that is most worthy.

Per. When will you, sacred sir, that we should give
To your great memory, those divine honours
Which such exalted virtue does deserve ?

Alex. When you are all most happy, and in peace...
Your hands—Oh, father, if I have discharg'd
The duty of a man to empire born ;
If, by unwearied toil, I have deserv'd

The vast renown of thy adopted son,
 Accept this soul which thou didst first inspire,
 And which this sigh thus gives thee back again.
(Dies.—Curtain falls to slow music.)

Disposition of the Characters when the Curtain falls.



EPILOGUE

SPOKEN BY ROXANA.

ARRAIGN'D for murder—lo! I stand before ye,
But ere you pass my sentence, hear my story.
What passive woman, were she in my place,
Cou'd brook such usage? Horrible disgrace!
To kiss the saucy minx before my face;
Hang on her neck, and sigh, and swear, and bellow—
Oh, I've not patience with the filthy fellow.
What, tho' one world my hero deem'd deficient,
One wife for any hero's sure sufficient.
You must allow 'twou'd any mortal vex
To lose the only comfort of one's sex.
Her nuptial right—which of you all wou'd share it?
And half a husband—Gods! what wife cou'd bear it?
But what, still worse than all the rest, provokes me,
To think his crowns and sceptres e'er cou'd coax me.
Let all the empire of the world's wide span
Be her's—but not an atom of my man.
Methinks I hear each wedded fair-one cry,
Well done, Roxana—she deserv'd to die.
What Christian wife cou'd bear such double-dealing?
And, sure, your heathen women have their feeling,
Two wives!—'Tis matrimonial fornication:
Pray heav'n avert such customs from this nation!
By such, let Eastern wives be bubbled still;
Two wives! for shame! two husbands if you will.
Aye, this, indeed, might suit a free-born woman,
Besides, our beaus—poor things!—are not like Ammon.
While thus you plead, this inference let me draw,
Nature is love's great universal law.
All feel alike what some disguise with art,
And each wrong'd wife's Roxana in her heart.
If none of you cou'd tamely yield her man,
Then find me guilty, ladies, if you can.

•



Engraved by Clever from a painting by Hans Holbein

MRS. OROVER,
AS MRS. FLORENCE

Oxberry's Edition.

THE
WAY TO KEEP HIM,

A COMEDY;

By

Arthur Murphy.

WITH PREFATORY REMARKS.

THE ONLY EDITION EXISTING WHICH IS FAITHFULLY MARKED WITH
THE STAGE BUSINESS, AND STAGE DIRECTIONS,

AS IT IS PERFORMED AT THE

Theatres Royal.

BY W. OXBERRY, Comedian.

LONDON:

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8, White-hart-yard, Drury-lane.**

Remarks.

THIS is a pleasing and almost perfect comedy, though not of the first order; something of its original brilliance is perhaps lost to us from its being the picture of manners which are ever changing, instead of passions, which are permanent; still enough of its first excellence remains to us to render it a delightful lesson.

The dialogue is often arch and lively, but seldom humorous and never witty: if however it have not the brilliant pungency of *Congreve* or *Sheridan*, it more nearly approaches the reality of life; the characters moreover are not only distinguished from each other but from themselves, an excellence which does not often belong to *Sheridan*, and never to *Congreve*; their characters are always playing the parts of wits, whether fools or knaves, laughing or serious; with *Murphy* it is directly the opposite; *Lovemore* is not more distinct from his wife than he is from himself in different situations; with the widow he is arch and gay, at home his dialogue is easy and familiar without an effort at humour except when his points are directed against his wife.

Mrs. Lovemore is a faithful portrait, fresh with life and reality; there is no exaggeration, no heightened colouring to produce effect; in the whole round of the modern drama from the time of *Congreve* downward, there is nothing superior to this, as far as truth is concerned; it has none of the loveliness of fiction, but all the perfection of truth.

Sir Bashful Constant is a very amusing exaggeration; but his exaggeration does not so much consist in his feelings as in his situations; his eternal dread of ridicule, which always leads him to do something that may merit it, is sufficiently natural; the character is not of unfrequent occurrence in life, but it is, we believe, always mixed up with a shrinking sensibility.

Much as we admire the celebrated scene in the "School for Scandal," we yet think it is not superior to the catastrophe of this comedy; the rapid developement of the entangled plan, the exultation of concealed treachery, and its exposure in the moment

of its triumph, at once so surprising and so natural, form a conclusion almost without a parallel.

On the other hand, it has been objected to *Murphy*, that he was a most decided plagiarist; this accusation is no doubt true, perhaps more true than even his accusers were aware of; he is particularly indebted to the forgotten comedies of *Sir William D'Avenant*, from which he has borrowed much excellent matter; the incident in "All in the wrong," of the lady fainting in the husband's arms, while the wife unseen looks on, and the double jealousy arising from the finding of the miniature, are literal transcripts from a comedy of *D'Avenant's*, the name of which we cannot immediately call to mind, and we have not the formidable folio of his works at hand to seek for it.—And here too we cannot help observing on the singular circumstance of a similar incident occurring in *Moliere*; this might be attributed to chance, but that on another occasion we find the French poet using the precise language of Massinger. The Empiric in the "Emperor of the East," says to the sick *Paulinus*—"For your own sake I most heartily wish that you had now all the diseases, maladies and infirmities upon you, that were ever remembered by old *Galen*, *Hippocrates*, or the later and more admired *Paracelsus*.

Paulinus.—For your good wish I thank you.

Empiric.—Take me with you I beseech your good Lordship—I urged it that your joy in being certainly and suddenly freed from them may be the greater, and my not-to-be-paralleled skill the more remarkable.

Emperor of the East Act 4. S. 3.

Thus too *Moliere*—

Toinette.—Je voudrais que vous eussiez toutes les maladies que je viens de dire, que vous fussiez abandonné de tous les medecins, désespéré, à l'agonié, vous montrer l'excellence de mes remèdes, et l'envie que j'aurois de vous rendre service.

Argan. Je vous suis obligé, monsieur, des bontes que vous avez pour moi.

Malade Imaginaire. Act 1. S. 13.

This coincidence, *Gilchrist* and, after him, as *Gifford* have observed is sufficiently striking; it is scarcely possible that *Moliere* could have been acquainted with the dramatic works of *Sir William D'Avenant* or *Massinger*, and yet how else shall we account for such similarity?

PROLOGUE.

When first the haughty critic's dreadful rage,
With Gothic fury over ran the stage,
Then Prologues rose, and strove with varied art
To gain the soft accesses to the heart ;
Through all the tuneful tribe th' infection flew
And each great genius—his petition drew,
In forma pauperis addressed the pit,
With all the gay antithesis of wit.
Their sacred art, poor poets own'd a crime ;
They sigh'd in simile ;—they bow'd in rhyme,
For charity they all were forc'd to beg ;
And ev'ry Prologue was “ a wooden leg.”

Next these, a hardy, manly race appear'd,
Who knew no dulness, and no audience fear'd.
From nature's store each curious tint they drew,
Then boldly held the piece to public view.

“ Lo ! here ! exact proportion ! just design !

“ The bold relief ! and the unerring line ?

“ Mark in soft union how the colours strike !

“ This sirs, you will—or this you ought to like.”

They bid defiance to the foes of wit,

“ Scatter'd like ratsbane up and down the pit.”

Such Prologues were of yore ;—our bard to night

Disdains a false compassion to excite,

Nor to secure your judgment would oppose ;

He packs no jury.—And he dreads no foes.

To govern here no party can expect ;

An audience will preserve its own respect.

Yet premature, nor grown up to full age

His little groupe, uncensur'd walk'd the stage.

His tablet to enlarge his hand he tries,

And bids his canvas glow with various dyes,

Where sense and folly mix in dubious strife,

Alternate rise, and struggle into life.

Judge if with art the mimic strokes he blend,

If amicably, light and shade contend ;

The mental features, if he trace with skill ;

—See the piece first—then damn it if you will.

SONG, IN THE WAY TO KEEP HIM.

The words by Mr. Garrick.—Music by Dr. Arne.

Ye fair married dames who so often deplore,
That a lover once blest, is a lover no more ;
Attend to my counsel, nor blush to be taught,
That prudence must cherish what beauty has caught.

The bloom of your cheek, and the glance of your eye,
Your roses and lilies, may make the men sigh :
But roses, and lilies, and sighs pass away,
And passion will die as your beauties decay.

Use the man that you wed, like your fav'rite guitar,
Tho' music in both, they are both apt to jar ;
How tuneful and soft from a delicate touch,
Not handled too roughly, nor play'd on too much.

The sparrow and linnet will feed from your hand ;
Grow tame by your kindness, and come at command,
Exert with your husbands the same happy skill,
For hearts, like your birds, may be tam'd to your will.

Be gay and good-humour'd, complying and kind,
Turn the chief of your care from your face to your
mind ;
'Tis there that a wife may her conquests improve,
And Hymen shall rivet the fetters of Love.

Costume.

LOVEMORE.

1st Dress.—Brown coat, white waistcoat, and breeches. 2nd.—Dress frock coat.

SIR BASHFUL CONSTANT.

Brown coat and breeches, and embroidered satin waistcoat.

SIR BRILLIANT FASHION.

Slate coloured dress frock coat, white waistcoat, and breeches.

WILLIAM and SIDEBORD.

Handsome liveries.

WIDOW BELLMOUR.

Black muslin dress, trimmed with silver.

MRS. LOVEMORE.

1st. Dress.—White muslin long sleeved dress. 2nd. Dress.—Crimson velvet body, white petticoat, trimmed with silver.

LADY CONSTANT.

Blue satin body, trimmed with silver, leno petticoat, trimmed with blue, satin sleeves spangled.

MIGNIONET.

White gown, and apron trimmed with black ribbon.

MUSLIN.

Coloured muslin gown.

FURNISH.

Brown stuff dress, trimmed with brown ribbon.

PERSONS REPRESENTED.

	<i>Drury-lane.</i>	<i>Covent-garden.</i>
<i>Lovemore</i>	Mr. Rae.	Mr. C. Kemble.
<i>Sir Bashful Constant</i>	Mr. Bannister.	Mr. W. Farren.
<i>Sir Brilliant Fashion</i>	Mr. Wrench.	Mr. Jones.
<i>William</i>	Mr. J. Wallack.	Mr. Connor.
<i>Sideboard</i>	Mr. Fisher.	Mr. Treby.
<i>Black Boy</i>		Mr. Menage.
<i>Servant</i>		Mr. Penn.
 <i>The Widow Bellmour</i>	 Mrs. Glover.	 Miss Brunton.
<i>Mrs. Lovemore</i>	Mrs. Orger.	Mrs. Faucit.
<i>Lady Constant</i>	Mrs. Horn.	Miss Foote.
<i>Mulin</i>	Miss Mellon.	Mrs. Gibbs.
<i>Mignonet</i>	Miss Tidswell.	Miss Logan.
<i>Furnish</i>,....	Mrs. Maddocks.	Mrs. Coates.
<i>Maid to Mrs. Lovemore</i>	Miss Jones.	Mrs. Sexton.

Stage Directions.

By R.H.....	is meant.....	Right Hand.
L.H.		Left Hand.
S.E.		Second Entrance.
U.E.		Upper Entrance.
M.D.		Middle Door.
D.F.		Door in Flat.
R.H.D.		Right Hand Door.
L.H.D.		Left Hand Door.

THE
WAY TO KEEP HIM.

ACT I.

SCENE I.—*A Room in Lovemore's House.*

WILLIAM *at cards*, L.H. *with a Brother Servant*, R.H.

Will. A plague on it!—I've ruined my game.—
Is forty-seven good?

Serv. Equal.—

Will. A plague go with it—tearse to a queen—

Serv. Equal.

Will. I've ruined my game, and be hanged to me.
I don't believe there's a footman in England plays
with worse luck than myself.—Four aces is fourteen!

Serv. That's hard:—equal, by Jupiter!

Will. Four aces is fourteen—fifteen. (*Plays.*)

Serv. There's your equality.

Will. Very well—sixteen—(*Plays.*) seventecn—
(*Plays.*)

Enter MUSLIN, L.H.

Mus. There's a couple of you, indeed!—You're so
fond of the vices of your betters, that you're scarce

out of your beds when you must pretend to imitate them and their ways, forsooth.

Will. Pr'ythee, be quiet, woman, do—eighteen—
(*Plays.*)

Mus. Set you up, indeed, Mr. Coxcomb—

Will. Nineteen!—Clubs— (*Plays.*)

Mus. Have done with your foolery, will ye? and send my lady word—

Will. Hold your tongue, Mrs. Muslin, you'll put us out.—What shall I play?—I'll tell you, woman, my master and I desire to have nothing to say to you or your lady.—Twenty—diamonds! (*Plays.*)

Mus. But I tell you, Mr. Saucebox, that my lady desires to know when your master came home last night, and how he is this morning?

Will. Pr'ythee be quiet: I and my master are resolved to be teased no more by you. And so, Mrs. Go-between, you may return as you came.—What the devil shall I play?—We'll have nothing to do with you I tell you—

Mus. You'll have nothing to do with us!—But you shall have to do with us, or I'll know the reason why. (*Snatches the cards out of his hands.*)

Will. Death and fury! this meddling woman has destroyed my whole game.

Mus. Now, sir, will you be so obliging as to send an answer to her questions—How and when your rakebelly master came home last night?

Will. I'll tell you, what, Mrs. Muslin,—you and my master, will be the death of me at last; that's what you will.—In the name of charity, what do you both take me for? Whatever appearances may be, I am but of mortal mould: Nothing supernatural about me.

Mus. Upon my word, Mr. Powderpuff!

Will. I have not indeed—And so, do you see, flesh and blood can't hold it always—I can't be for ever a slave to your whims, and your second-hand airs.

(*Crosses to R.H.*)

Mus. Second-hand airs!—

Will. Yes, second-hand airs!—You take them at your ladies' toilets with their cast gowns, and so you descend to us with them.—And then, on the other hand, there's my master!—Because he chuses to live upon the principal of his health, and so run out his whole stock as fast as he can, he must have the pleasure of my company with him in his devil's dance to the other world.—Never at home till three, four, five, six in the morning!

Mus. Ay, a vile ungrateful man! to have so little regard for a wife that doats upon him.—And your love for me, is all of a piece. I've no patience with you both.—A couple of false, perfidious, abandoned, profligate—

Will. Hey, hey! where's your tongue running?—My master, is as the world goes, a good sort of a civil kind of a husband, and I,—Heaven help me,—a poor simpleton of an amorous, constant puppy, that bears with all the follies of his little tyrant here.—Come and kiss me you jade, come and kiss me.

Mus. Paws off, Cæsar—Don't think to make me your dupe. I know when you go with him to this new lady, this Bath acquaintance—and I know, you're as false as my master, and give all my dues to your Mrs. Mignonet there.—

Will. Hush,—not a word of that.—I'm' ruined, pressed, and sent on board a tender directly, if you blab that I trusted you with that secret.—But to charge me with falsehood, injustice, and ingratitude! My master, to be sure, does drink an agreeable dish of tea with the Widow.—Has been there every night this month past.—How long it will last, heaven knows! But thither he goes, and I attend him.—I ask my master,—sir, says I, what time would you please to want me?—He gives me his answer, and then I strut by Mrs. Mignonet, without so much as giving her one glance: she stands watering at the mouth, and “A pretty fellow, that,” says she.—“Ay, ay, gaze on,” says I, “gaze on;—I see what you would be at: you'd be glad to have me.—you'd

be glad to have me.—But sour grapes, my dear! I'll go home and cherish my own lovely wanton."—And so I do, you know I do.—Then, after toying with thee I hasten back to my master—later, indeed, than he desired, but always too soon for him. He's loath to part? he lingers and dangles, and I stand cooling my heels.—O, to the devil I pitch such a life!—

Mus. Why don't you strive to reclaim the vile man then?

Will. Softly, not so fast; I have my talent to be sure! yes, yes, I have my talent; some influence over my master's mind:—But can you suppose that I have power to turn the drift of his inclinations, and lead him as I please—and to whom?—to his wife! Pshaw! ridiculous, foolish, and absurd!

Mus. Mighty well, sir! can you proceed?

Will. I tell you, a wife is out of date now-a-days; time was—but that's all over—a wife's a drug now; mere tar-water, with every virtue under heaven, but no body takes it.

Mus. Well, I swear I could smack your impudent face.

Will. Come and kiss me, I say—

Mus. A fiddlestick for your kisses!—while you encourage your master in open rebellion against the best of wives,—

Will. I tell you, it's her own fault; why don't she strive to please him, as you do me?—Come, throw your arms about my neck—

Mus. Ay, as I used to do, Mr. Brazen!—(*Bell rings, L.H.*) Hush! My lady's bell rings.—How long has he been up?—When did he come home?

Will. At five this morning; rubbed his forehead, damned himself for a blockhead, went to bed in a peevish humour, and is now in tiptop spirits with sir Brilliant Fashion, in the next room. (*Bell rings, L.H.*)

Mus. O lud! that bell rings again—There, there, let me be gone. [*She kisses him, exit, L.H.*]

Will. There goes high and low life contrasted in

one person : 'tis well I have not told her the whole of my master's secrets : she'll blab that he visits this widow from Bath. But if they inquire, they'll be told he does not—'The plot lies deeper than they are aware of, and so they will only get into a puzzle—hush!—yonder comes my master and sir Brilliant—Let me get out of the way.—Here, Tom, help me to take away the things. *[Exeunt, L.H.]*

Enter LOVEMORE and SIR BRILLIANT FASHION, R.H.

Love. Ha! ha!—my dear sir Brilliant—I must both pity and laugh at you—I'll swear thou art metamorphosed into the most whimsical being!—

Sir Brill. Nay pr'ythee, Lovemore, truce with your raillery—it is for sober advice that I apply to you—

Love. Sober advice!—'ha! ha!—Thou art very far gone indeed.—Sober advice! There is no such thing as talking seriously and soberly to the tribe of lovers—That eternal absence of mind that possesses ye all—There is no society with you—I was damnable company myself, when I was one of the pining herd; but a dose of matrimony has brought me back again to myself; has cooled me pretty handsomely, I assure you;—Ay! and here comes *repetatur Haustus*.

Enter MUSLIN, L.H.

Mus. My lady sends her compliments, and desires to know how you are this morning?

Love. O lord! my head aches woefully—it's the devil to be teased in this manner—What did you say, child?

Mus. My lady sent to know how you do, sir—

Love. O right!—your lady—give her my compliments, and I am very well : tell her—

Mus. She begs you won't think of going out without seeing her.

Love. There again, now!—tell her—tell her what you will—I shall be glad to see her—I'll wait on her—any thing—what you will.

Mus. I shall let my lady know, sir. [*Exit, L.H.*]

Love. My dear sir Brilliant, you see I am an example before your eyes—Put the widow Bellmour entirely out of your head, and let my lord Etheridge—

Sir Bril. Positively no!—My pride is piqued, and if I can my lord Etheridge shall find me a more formidable rival than he is aware of.

Enter WILLIAM, L.H.

Will. Sir Bashful Constant is in his chariot at the upper end of the street, and has sent his servant to know if your honour is at home.

Love. By all means—I shall be glad to see sir Bashful. [*Exit William, L.H.*] Now here comes another mortifying instance to deter you from all thoughts of marriage.

Sir Bril. Pshaw! hang him; he is no instance for me—a younger brother, who has lived in middling life; comes to an estate and a title on the death of a consumptive baronet, marries a woman of quality, and carries the primitive ideas of his narrow education into high life—Hang him!—he is no example for me.

Love. But he is a good deal improved since that time.

Sir Bril. Po! a mere Hottentot; unacquainted with life,—blushes every moment, and looks suspicious, as if he imagined you have some design upon him.

Love. Why, I fancy, I can explain that—I have found out a part of his character lately.—You must know, there is nothing he dreads so much as being an object of ridicule: and so, let the customs and fashions of the world be ever so absurd, he complies, lest he should be laughed at for being particular.

Sir Bril. And so through the fear of being ridiculous, he becomes substantially so every moment.

Love. Just so.—And then, to see him shrink back as it were, from your observation, casting a jealous and fearful eye all around him. (*Mimics him.*)

Sir Bril. Ha! ha!—that's his way—but there is something worse in him—his behaviour to his lady—Ever quarrelling, and insulting her with nonsense about the dignity of a husband, and his superior reason.

Love. Why, there again now; his fear of being ridiculous, may be at the bottom of that.—I don't think he hates my lady Constant—She is a fine woman, and knows the world.—There is something mysterious in that part of his conduct.

Sir Bril. Mysterious! not to you—he is ever consulting you—you are in all his secrets.

Love. Yes, but I never can find any of them out! And yet there is something working within, that he would fain tell me, and yet he is shy, and he hints, and he hesitates, and then he returns again into himself, and ends just where he began.—Hark! I hear his chariot at the door.

Sir Bril. Why do you let him come after you?—he is a sad troublesome fellow, Lovemore.

Love. Nay, you are too severe—Come, he has fits of goodnature.

Sir Bril. His wife has fits of goodnature, you mean—How goes on your design there?

Love. Po, po! I have no design, but I take it, you are a formidable man in that quarter.

Sir Bril. Who, I? Pshaw! no such thing.

Love. Never deny it to me;—I know you have made advances.

Sir Bril. Why, faith, I pity my lady Constant, and cannot bear to see her treated as she is.

Love. Well, that's generous—have a care; I hear him—Sir Brilliant, I admire your amorous charity of all things—ha! ha!—Hush! here he comes.

Enter SIR BASHFUL, L.H.D.

Sir Bash. Mr. Lovemore, a good morning to you
—Sir Brilliant, your servant, sir.

Sir Bril. Sir Bashful, I am heartily glad to see you—I hope you left my lady well.

Sir Bash. I can't say, sir; I am not her physician.

Sir Bril. What a brute!—Well, Lovemore, I must be gone.

Love. Why in such a hurry?

Sir Bril. I must—I promised to call on a lady over the way—A relation of mine from Wiltshire—I shan't stay long.

Love. Very well—a l'honneur.

Sir Bril. Sir Bashful, your servant—Mr. Lovemore yours. [Exit L.H.D.]

Sir Bash. (On R.H.) Mr. Lovemore, I am glad he is gone; for I have something to advise with you about.

Love. Have you?

Sir Bash. I have had another brush with my wife!

Love. I am sorry for it, sir Bashful—I am perfectly glad of it. (Aside.)

Sir Bash. Ay! and pretty warm the quarrel was.—“Sir Bashful,” says she, “I wonder you will disgrace yourself at this rate—you know my pin money is not sufficient.—My mercer has been with me again—I can't bear to be dunn'd at this rate: and then she added something about her quality—you know, Mr. Lovemore, (Smiling.) she is a woman of quality.

Love. Yes, and a fine woman too!

Sir Bash. No—no—no—do you think she is a fine woman?

Love. Most certainly—a very fine woman!

Sir Bash. (Smiling.) Why, yes—I think she is what you may call a fine woman.—She keeps good company, Mr. Lovemore.

Love. The very best.

Sir Bash. Yes, yes; that she does; your tiptop; none else;—but one would not encourage her too much, for all that, Mr. Lovemore—The world would think me but a weak man if I did.

Love. The world will talk, sir Bashful.

Sir Bash. So it will;—and so I answered her

stoutly. "Madam," says I, "a fig for your quality—don't quality me—I'll act like a man of sense, madam, and I'll be master in my own house, madam;—I have made a provision for the issue of our marriage in the settlement, madam; and I would have you to know, that I am not obliged to pay for your cats and your dogs, and your squirrels, and your monkeys, and your gaming debts."

Love. How could you? That was too sharply said—

Sir Bash. Aye, aye, I gave it her—but for all that (*Smiling.*) I—I—I am very good natured at the bottom, Mr. Lovemore.

Love. I dare say you are, sir Bashful—

Sir Bash. Yes, yes; but a man must keep up his own dignity—I'll tell you what I did—I went to the mercer's myself, and paid him the money. (*Smiles at him.*)

Love. Did you?

Sir Bash. I did: but then one would not let the world know that—No, no.

Love. By no means.

Sir Bash. It would make them think me too uxorious.

Love. So it would!—I must encourage that notion of his. (*Aside.*)

Sir Bash. And so I told him; "Mr. Lutestring," says I, "mum's the word—there is your money; but let nobody know that I paid you sily."

Love. Well, you have the handsomest way of doing a genteel thing—

Sir Bash. But that is not all I have to tell you.

Love. No!

Sir Bash. No—no—(*Smiling.*) I have a deeper secret than that.

Love. Have you?

Sir Bash. I have;—may I trust you?

Love. O! upon my honour—

Sir Bash. Well, well! I know you are my friend—I know you are, and I have great confidence in you.—Look'ye, Mr. Lovemore, you must know—

Enter MUSLIN, L.H.

Mus. Sir my lady desires to know, if you will drink a dish of tea with her this morning?

Love. I desire I may not be teased in this manner—tell your mistress—go—go about your business—(*Turns her out.*)

Sir Bash. (*Aside.*) Ay! I see he don't care a cherry-stone for his wife.

Love. I hate this interruption—Well, sir Bashful—

Sir Bash. No; he does not care a pinch of snuff for her. (*Aside.*)

Love. Well—Proceed, sir Bashful—

Sir Bash. It does not signify, Mr. Lovemore; it's a foolish affair, I won't trouble you about it—

Love. Nay, that's unkind—

Sir Bash. Well, well! come, I will—Do you think Muslin did not overhear us?

Love. Not a syllable—Come, come, we are safe—

Sir Bash. Let me ask you a question first—Pray now, have you any regard for your lady?

Love. The highest value for her.

Sir Bash. I repose it with you.—You must know, Mr. Lovemore—as I told you—I am at the bottom very good-natured; and though appearances may in some sort—(*Sir Brilliant sings without.*) We are interrupted again.

Enter SIR BRILLIANT, L.H.D.

Sir Bril. Well, I have paid my visit, Lovemore.

Love. This is the most cross accident—So sir Brilliant!

Sir Bash. Ah! I see there is no going on now—Mr. Lovemore, I wish you a good day. (*Crosses to R.H.*)

Love. Po! Pr'ythee—you shan't go. (*Crosses to R.H.*)

Sir Bash. Yes, yes; another time—Suppose you call at my house at one o'clock—nobody shall interrupt us there. (*Aside to Lovemore.*)

Love. With all my heart.

Sir Bash. Do so, then; do so—we'll be snug by ourselves—Well, Mr. Lovemore, your servant, a good morning—Sir Brilliant, I kiss your hand.—You won't forget, Mr. Lovemore.

Love. Depend upon me.

Sir Bash. Very well.—He is the only friend I have.

[*Exit L.H.*]

Love. Ha! ha!—you broke in upon us in the most critical moment—He was just going to communicate—

Sir Bril. I beg your pardon; I did not know—

Love. Nay, it's no matter; I shall get it out of him another time.

Enter MUSLIN. L.H.

Mus. My lady, sir, is quite impatient.

Love. Pshaw! for ever teasing!—I'll wait upon her presently. [*Exit Muslin, L.H.*]

Sir Bril. I'll step and entertain her while you dress—May I take that liberty, Lovemore? (*Crosses to L.H.*)

Love. You know you may—no ceremony—how could you ask such a question?—apropos; But, sir Brilliant, first step one moment into my study—I want just one word with you.

Sir Bril. I attend you.

Love. This absurd sir Bashful! ha! ha! a ridiculous, unaccountable—ha! ha! [*Exeunt R.H.*]

SCENE II.—*Another Apartment.*

MRS. LOVEMORE discovered, and a MAID attending her.

Mrs. Love. This trash of tea!—I don't know why I drink so much of it.—Heigho! I wonder what keeps Muslin—do you step, child, and see if she is come back?

Maid. Yes, ma'am.

[*Exit L.H.*]

Mrs. Love. Surely, never was any poor woman treated with such cruel indifference; nay, with such an open, undisguised insolence of gallantry.

Enter MUSLIN, L.H.

Mrs. Love. Well, Muslin, have you seen his prime minister?

Mus. Yes, ma'am, I have seen Mr. William; and he says, as how my master came home according to custom, at five this morning, and in a huge pickle.—He is now in his study, and has sir Brilliant Fashion with him.

Mrs. Love. Is he there again?

Mus. He is, ma'am; and as I came by the door, I heard them both laughing as loud as any thing.

Mrs. Love. About some precious mischief, I'll be sworn; and all at my cost, too!—Heigho!

Mus. Dear ma'am, why will you chagrin yourself about a vile man, that is not worth—no, as I live and breathe,—not a single sigh!

Mrs. Love. What can I do, muslin?

Mus. Do, ma'am! Lard!—if I was as you, I'd do for him:—as I am a living christian, I would.—If I could not cure my grief, I'd find some comforts, that's what I would.

Mrs. Love. Heigho!—I have no comfort.

Mus. No comfort, ma'am?—Whose fault then?—Would any body but you, ma'am—It provokes me to think of it.—Would any body ma'am, young and handsome as you are, with so many accomplishments, ma'am, sit at home here, as melancholy as a poor servant out of place?—And all this, for what?—Why, for a husband! and such a husband!—What do you think the world will say of you, ma'am, if you go on this way?

Mrs. Love. I care not what they say—I am tired of the world, and the world may be tired of me, if it will:—My troubles are my own only, and I must endeavour to bear them.—Who knows what patience

may do?—If Mr. Lovemore has any feeling left, my resignation may some day or other have its effect, and incline him to do me justice.

Mus. But, dear ma'am, that's waiting for dead men's shoes,—incline him to do you justice!—What signifies expecting and expecting? Give me a bird in the hand.—Lard, ma'am, to be for ever pining and grieving!—Dear heart! If all the women in London, in your case, were to sit down and die of the spleen, what would become of all the public places?—They might turn Vauxhall to a hop-garden, make a brew-house of Ranelagh, and let both the playhouses to a methodist preacher. We should not have the racketing with them we have now—"John, let the horses be put to—John, go to my lady Trumpabout's, and invite her to a small party of twenty or thirty card-tables.—John, run to my lady Catgut, and let her ladyship know I'll wait on her to the new opera.—John, run as fast as ever you can, with my compliments to Mr. Brandon, and tell him, I shall take it as the greatest favour on earth, if he will let me have a side-box for the new play. No, excuse, tell him." They whisk about the town, and rantipole it with as unconcerned looks, and as florid outsides, as if they were treated at home like so many goddesses, though every body knows possession has ungoddessed them all long ago; and their husbands care no more for them,—no, by jingo, no more than they do for their husbands.

Mrs. Love. You run on at a strange rate.

Mus. (*In a passion.*) Dear ma'am, 'tis enough to make a body run on—If every body thought like you—

Mrs. Love. If every body lov'd like me.

Mus. A brass thimble for love, if it is not answered by love.—What the deuce is here to do?—Shall I go and fix my heart upon a man, that shall despise me for that very reason;—and, "Aye," says he, "poor fool, I see she loves me,—the woman's well enough, only she has one inconvenient circumstance about her: I'm married to her, and marriage is the devil."

—And then, when he's going a roguing, smiles impudently in your face, and, "My dear, divert yourself, I'm just going to kill half an hour at the chocolate-house, or to peep in at the play:—your servant, my dear, your servant."—Fye upon 'em!—I know 'em all.—Give me a husband that will enlarge the circle of my innocent pleasures:—but a husband now-a-days, ma'am, is no such a thing.—A husband now—as I hope for mercy, is nothing at all but a scare-crow; to show you the fruit, but touch it if you dare.—A husband! the devil take 'em all!—Lord forgive me for swearing—is nothing but a bug-bear, a snap-dragon: a husband, ma'am, is—

Mrs. Love. Pr'ythee, peace with your tongue, and see what keeps that girl.

Mus. Yes, ma'am—Why, Jenny! why don't you come up to my lady? What do you stand a gossiping there for?—A husband, ma'am, 'is a mere monster;—that is to say, if one makes him so; then for certain he is a monster indeed; and if one does not make him so, then he behaves like a monster; and of the two evils, by my troth—Ma'am, was you ever at the play of Catharine and Mercutio?—The vile man calls his wife his goods, and his chattels, and his household stuff.—There you may see, ma'am, what a husband is,—a husband is.—But here comes one will tell you—Here comes sir Brilliant Fashion.—Ask his advice, ma'am.

Mrs. Love. His advice! Ask advice of the man who has estranged Mr. Lovemore's affections from me!

Mus. Well, I protest and vow, ma'am, I think sir Brilliant a very pretty gentleman.—He's the very pink of the fashion!—he dresses fashionably, lives fashionably, wins your money fashionably, loses his own fashionably, and does every thing fashionably: and then, he is so lively, and talks so lively, and so much to say, and so never at a loss—But here he comes.

Enter SIR BRILLIANT, singing, L.H.

Sir Bril. Mrs. Lovemore, your most obedient very

humble servant.—But, my dear madam, what always in a vis-a-vis party with your *Suivante*?—You will afford me your pardon, my dear ma'am, if I avow that this does a little wear the appearance of misanthropy.

Mrs. Love. Far from it, sir Brilliant—We were engaged in your panegyric.

Sir Bril. My panegyric!—Then I am come most apropos to give a helping hand towards making it complete.—Mr. Lovemore will kiss your hand presently, ma'am, he has not as yet entirely adjusted his dress—In the mean time, I can, if you please, help you to some anecdotes, which will perhaps enable you to colour your canvass a little higher.

Mrs. Love. I hope you will be sure, among those anecdotes,—You may go, Muslin,—not to omit the egregious exploit of seducing Mr. Lovemore entirely from his wife.

(*She makes a sign to MUSLIN to go.*)—[*Exit, MUSLIN, R.H.*]

Sir Bril. I, ma'am!—Let me perish, ma'am—

Mrs. Love. O, sir, I am no stranger to—

Sir Bril. May fortune eternally forsake me, and beauty frown on me, if ever—

Mrs. Love. Don't protest too strongly, sir Brilliant.

Sir Bril. May I never hold four by howours—

Mrs. Love. O, sir, it is in vain to deny—

Sir Bril. Nay, but my dear Mrs. Lovemore, give me leave.—I alienate the affections of Mr. Lovemore!—Consider, madam, how would this tell in Westminster Hall?—Sir Brilliant Fashion, how say you? guilty of this indictment, or not guilty?—Not guilty, poz.—Thus issue is joined;—you enter the court, and in sober sadness charge the whole plump upon me, without a word as to the how, when, and where;—No proof positive,—there ends the prosecution.

Mrs. Love. But, sir, your stating of the case—

• *Sir Bril.* Dear ma'am, don't interrupt—

Mrs. Love. Let me explain this matter—

Sir Bril. Nay, Mrs. Lovemore, allow me fair play—I am now upon my defence.—You will please to consider, gentlemen of the jury, that Mr. Lovemore is not a ward, nor I a guardian; that he is his own master to do as he pleases; that Mr. Lovemore is fond of gaiety, pleasure, and enjoyment; that he knows how to live; to make use of the senses nature has given him, and pluck the fruit that grows around him.—This is the whole affair.—How say ye, gentlemen of the jury?—Not guilty. —There, ma'am, you see,—Not guilty.

Mrs. Love. You run on finely, sir Brilliant;—but don't imagine that this bantering way—

Sir Bril. Acquitted by my country, ma'am, you see,—fairly acquitted!

Mrs. Love. After the very edifying counsel you give Mr. Lovemore, this loose strain of yours, sir Brilliant, is not at all surprising; and, sir, your late project—

Sir Bril. My late project!

Mrs. Love. Yes, sir; Not content with leading Mr. Lovemore into a thousand dissipations from all conjugal affection and domestic happiness, you have lately introduced him to your Mrs. Bellmour,—

Sir Bril. Ma'am, he does not so much as know Mrs. Bellmour.

Mrs. Love. Fie upon it, sir Brilliant!—falsehood is but a poor—

Sir Bril. Falsehood I disdain, ma'am,—and I, sir Brilliant Fashion, declare, that Mr. Lovemore, your husband, is not acquainted with the Widow Bellmour. You don't know that lady, ma'am; but I'll let you into her whole history—her whole history, ma'am:—Pray be seated—(*Brings chairs down.*) The Widow Bellmour is a lady of so agreeable a vivacity, that it is no wonder all the pretty fellows are on their knees to her.—Her manner so entertaining, such quickness of transition from one thing to another; and every thing she

does, does so become her:—and then she has such a feeling heart, and such generosity of sentiment!—

Mrs. Love. Mighty well, sir!—She is a very vestal—and a vestal from your school of painting must be very curious—But give me leave, sir—How comes it that you desist from paying your addresses in that quarter?

Sir Bril. Why, faith, I find that my lord George Etheridge,—who I thought was out of the kingdom,—is the happy man: and so all that remains for me, is to do justice to the lady, and console myself in the best manner I can, for the insufficiency of my pretensions.

Mrs. Love. And may I rely on this?

Sir Bril. May the first woman I put the question to strike me to the centre with a supercilious eyebrow, if every syllable is not minutely true;—so that you see, ma'am, I am not the cause of your inquietude. There is not on earth a man that could be more averse from such a thing; nor a person in the world, who so earnestly aspires to prove the tender esteem he bears ye.—*(She rises disconcerted.)* You see, my dear ma'am, we both have cause of discontent; we are both disappointed,—both crossed in love—and so ma'am, the least we can do, is, both heartily join to—

Love. *(Speaks within.)* William! is the chariot at the door?

Sir Bril. We are interrupted—There's my friend.

Enter LOVEMORE, L.H.

Love. Very well—let the chariot be brought round directly.—How do you do this morning, my dear? Sir Brilliant, I beg your pardon—How do you do, my dear? *(With an air of cold civility, to Mrs. Love.)*

Mrs. Love. Only a little indisposed in mind, and indisposition of the mind is of no sort of consequence—not worth a cure.

Love. I beg your pardon, Mrs. Lovemore—Indis-

position of the mind—Sir Brilliant, that is really a mighty pretty ring you have on your finger.

Sir Bril. A bauble :—Will you look at it?

Mrs. Love. Though I have but few obligations to sir Brilliant, yet I fancy I may ascribe to him the favour of this visit, Mr. Lovemore.

Love. (*Looking at the Ring.*) Nay, now positively you wrong me ;—I was obliged to you for your civil inquiries concerning me this morning ; and so, on my part, I came to return the compliment before I go abroad.—Upon my word, 'tis very prettily set.

(*Gives it.*)

Mrs. Love. Are you going abroad, sir ?

Love. A matter of business,—I hate business—but business must be done. (*Playing with his watch chain.*) Pray is there any news ?—any news, my dear ?

Mrs. Love. It would be news to me, sir, if you would be kind enough to let me know whether I may expect the favour of your company to dinner ?

Love. It would be impertinent in me to answer such a question, because I can give no direct positive answer to it ;—as things happen—perhaps I may—perhaps may not.—But don't let me be of any inconvenience to you ;—it is not material where a body eats.—Apropos—you have heard what happened ? (*To Sir Brilliant.*)

Sir Bril. When and where ?

Love. A word in your ear—Ma'am, with your permission—

Mrs. Love. That cold, contemptuous civility, Mr. Lovemore—

Love. Pshaw ! pr'ythee, now—How can you, my dear ?—That's very peevish now, and ill-natured. It is but about a mere trifle—Harkye, (*Whispers.*) I lost every thing I played for, after you went,—The foreigner and he understand one another.—I beg pardon, ma'am, it was only about an affair at the opera.

Mrs. Love. The opera, Mr. Lovemore, or anything, is more agreeable than my company.

Love. You wrong me, now; I declare you wrong me;—and if it will give you any pleasure, I'll sup at home.—Can't we meet at the St. Alban's to-night?

(*Aside to sir Brilliant.*)

Mrs. Love. I believe, I need not tell you what pleasure that would give me: But unless the pleasure is mutual, Mr. Lovemore—

Love. Ma'am, I—I—I perceive all the delicacy of that sentiment;—But—a—I shall incommode you;—you possibly may have some private party.—and it would be very unpolite in me, to obstruct your schemes of pleasure.—Would it not, sir Brilliant? (*Laughs.*)

Sir Bril. It would be gothic to the last degree. Ha! ha!

Love. Ha! ha!—To be sure; for me to be of the party, would look as if we lived together like our friend sir Bashful Constant and his lady, who are for ever like two game cocks, ready armed to goad and wound one another most heartily—Ha! ha!

Sir Bril. The very thing—Ha! ha!

Love. So it is—so it is! (*Both stand laughing.*)

Mrs. Love. Very well, gentlemen! you have it all to yourselves.

Love. Odso!—(*Looking at his watch.*) I shall be beyond my time.—Any commands into the city, madam?

Mrs. Love. Commands!—I have no commands, sir.

Love. I have an appointment there at my banker's, —Sir Brilliant, you know old Discount?

Sir Bril. What he that was in parliament?

Love. The same.—Entire Butt, I think, was the name of the borough.—Ha! ha! ha!—Can I set you down any where, sir Brilliant?

Sir Bril. Can you give me a cast in St. James's Street?

Love. By all means—*Allons*—Mrs. Lovemore, your most obedient, ma'am.—Who waits there?—Mrs. Lovemore, no ceremony—your servant.

[*Exit singing, L.H.D.*]

Sir Bril. Ma'am, you see I don't carry Mr. Love-more abroad now—I have the honour, ma'am, to take my leave—I shall have her, I see plainly ;—Sir Brilliant, mind your hits, and your business is done. (*Aside.*) Ma'am, your most obedient. [*Exit, L.H.D.*]

Enter MUSLIN, hastily, R.H.

Mus. Did you call, ma'am ?

Mrs. Love. To be insulted thus by his loose confident carriage !—

Mus. As I live and breathe, ma'am, if I was as you, I would not flutter myself about it.

Mrs. Love. About what ?

Mus. La ! what signifies mincing matters !—I overheard it all.

Mrs. Love. You did !—did you ? (*Angrily.*)

Mus. Ma'am !

Mrs. Love. It does not signify at present.

Mus. No, ma'am, it does not signify, and revenge is sweet, I think ; and, by my troth ! I don't see why you should stand on ceremony with a husband that stands upon none with you.

Mrs. Love. Again !—Pr'ythee, Mrs. Malapert, none of your advice—How dare you talk in this manner to me ?—Let me hear no more of this impertinent freedom. (*Walks about.*)

Mus. No, ma'am.—It's very well, ma'am.—I have done, ma'am.—(*Disconcerted, and then she speaks aside.*)—What the devil is here to do ?—An unmanly thing, to go for to huff me in this manner !—

Mrs. Love. (*Still walking about.*) To make his character public, and render him the subject of every tea-table throughout this town, would only serve to widen the breach, and, instead of his neglect, might call forth his anger, and settle at last into a fixed aversion.—Lawyers, parting, and separate maintenance, would ensue.—No,—I must avoid that.—If possible I will avoid that.—What must be done ?

Mus. What can she be thinking of now ?—The

sulky thing, not to be more familiar with such a friend as I am!—What can she mean?—Did you speak to me, ma'am?

Mrs. Love. Suppose I were to try that!—Muslin.

Mus. Ma'am!—Now for it—

Mrs. Love. You heard sir Brilliant deny that Mr. Lovemore visits at this Widow Bellmour's.

Mus. Lard, ma'am, he is as full of fibs as a French milliner,—he does visit there,—I know it all from William,—I'll be hang'd in my own garters, if he does not.

Mrs. Love. I know not what to do!—Heigho!—I'll venture—Let my chair be got ready instantly.

(*Crosses L.H.*)

Mus. Your chair, ma'am!—Are you going out, ma'am?

Mrs. Love. Don't tease me with your talk, but do as I bid you,—and bring my cloak down to the parlour immediately.—Heigho!

[*Exit, L.H.*]

Mus. What is in the wind now?—An ill natured puss, not to tell me what she is about—It's no matter,—she does not know what she is about—Before I'd lead such a life as she does, I'd take a lover's leap into Rosamond's pond. I love to see company, for my part, and not to be mop'd to death here with her humdrum ways—tease, tease, tease—'Heigho! Muslin, go to William—where's his master?—when did he come home?—how long has he been up?—how does he do? with the same thing over and over again, to the end of the chapter.—A fine life indeed, for a person that has such fine spirits as I have by nature; it's enough to ruin my constitution. I love to see company, for my part—Bless me! I had like to have forgot, there's that Mrs. Marmalet comes to my rout to-night.—I had as lieve she had stay'd away—She's nothing but mere lumber—So formal—She won't play above shilling whist: who the devil does she think is to make a shilling party for her? No such thing to be done now-a-days—Nobody plays shilling whist now, unless I was to send for the tradespeople—

but I shan't let myself down at that rate for Madam Marmalet, I promise you. [Exit, L.H.]

END OF ACT. I.

ACT II.

SCENE I—*Sir Bashful Constant's.*

Enter SIR BASHFUL, R.H.

(*Knock, L.H.D.*)

Sir Bash. Did not I hear a knock at the door?—Yes, yes, I did—the coach is just driving away—Ay, ay! I am right enough—Sideboard! Sideboard!—come hither, Sideboard!—I must know who it is—My wife keeps the best company in England—but I must be cautious—Servants love to peep into the bottom of their master's secrets

Enter SIDEBOARD, L.H.

Whose coach was that at the door just now?

Side. The duchess of Hurricane's, please your honour

Sir Bash. The duchess of Hurricane's!—A woman of great rank—The duchess of Hurricane, Sideboard! What did she want?

Side. I can't say, your honour—She left this card.

Sir Bash. A card!—Let me see it.— (*Reads.*)

The duchess of Hurricane's compliments to lady Constant; she has left the rooks, and the country squires, and the crows, and the fox hunters, and the hounds, to their own dear society for the rest of the winter; and lets her ladyship know, that she sees company, at Hurricane House, on Wednesdays for the remainder of the season.

Make me thankful! Here's a card from a duchess!
(*Aside.*) What have you in your hand?

Side. Cards that have been left here all this morning, your honour.

Sir Bash. All the morning!—Why, I may as well—May as well keep the Coach and Horses in Piccadilly—I won't bear this, Sideboard, I can't bear it—
(*Aside.*) Ha! ha! ha!—Let me see,—let me see!

Side. There, your honour. (*Gives the cards.*)

Sir Bash. What! all these this morning, Sideboard?

Side. Yes, please your honour.

Sir Bash. This is too much, Sideboard—it is too much indeed! Ha! ha! ha! (*Aside.*) I can't bear it, Sideboard!—No, no—I cannot bear it.—Ha! ha! ha!
(*Aside.*) Make me thankful! All people of tiptop condition to visit my wife. Ha! ha! ha! (*Aside.*)

Enter FURNISH, R.H.

What's the matter, Furnish?

Fur. Nothing, sir; nothing's the matter.

Sir Bash. What are you about? Where are you going? What have you to do now?

Fur. To do, sir?—Only to tell the chairmen they must go out with the chair this evening, and black George with a flambeau before them, to pay some visits, that's all.

Sir Bash. What polite ways people of fashion have of being intimate with one another!—An empty chair to return visits for her!—I can't help laughing at it.—Ha! ha! ha! ha!—I like to see her do like other people
(*Aside.*) But I shall be found out by my servants—I tell you, Sideboard, and I tell you too, Mrs. Impertinence, that my lady leads a life of folly, and noise, and hurry, and cards, and dice, and absurdity, and nonsense; and I won't bear it—I am resolv'd I will not—I think I hear her coming! I do—I do—I will not go on this way! and now, I'll tell her roundly a piece of my mind.

Enter LADY CONSTANT, R.H.

She looks charmingly to-day! (*Aside.*) So, my lady Constant—I have had my house full of duns again to-day.

Lady Con. Obliging creatures to call so often!—What did they want?

Sir Bash. What did they want!—They wanted their money.

Lady Con. Well, and you paid them—Did not you?

Sir Bash. I pay them!—'Sdcath, madam! what do you take me for?

Lady Con. I took you for a husband, but I find I was mistaken.

Sir Bash. Death and fire!—I see you're an ungrateful woman—I am sure, my lady Constant, I have behav'd with great good-nature to you—Did not I go into parliament, madam, to please you?—Did not I go and get drunk at a borough for a month together; ay, and mobbed at the George and Vulture, and pelted and horse-whipp'd the day before election,—and all this to please you?—Did not I stand up in the House to make a speech merely to gratify your pride?—And did not I expose myself there?—Did I know whether I stood on my head or my heels?—What the devil had I to do in parliament? What's my country to me?

Lady Con. Who mention'd your country, sir?

Sir Bash. I desire you won't mention it—I have nothing to do with it—No, nor with your debts—I have nothing to do with them; and I desire you will tell your people to come no more after me.—I know how to prevent that—Notice in the Gazette will exempt me from your extravagances—I did not live in the Temple for nothing.

Fur. I protest, I never heard any body talk so mean in all my days before.

Lady Con. Don't you be so pert, pray.—Leave the room—Go both of you down stairs. (*Crosses to L.H.*)

[*Exeunt* Furnish and Sideboard, L.H.]

Sir Bash. I have kept it up pretty well before my servants. She's a fine woman, and talks admirably!

(*Aside.*)

Lady Con. Is there never to be an end of this usage, sir Bashful?—Am I to be for ever made unhappy by your humours?

Sir Bash. Humours?—I like that expression prodigiously!—Humours, indeed!

Lady Con. You may harp upon the word, sir—Humours you have, sir, and such as are become insupportable. (*Crosses to R.H.*)

Sir Bash. She talks like an angel! (*Aside.*) Madam. (*Moderating his voice.*) I should have no humours, as you call them, if your extravagancies were not insupportable.—What would the world say?—Let us canvass the matter quietly and easily—What would the world think of my understanding, if I was seen to encourage your way of life?

Lady Con. What will they think of it now, sir? Take this along with you, there is a certain set of people, who, when they would avoid an error, are sure to fall into the opposite extreme.

Sir Bash. There's for you!—That's a translation from Horace—*Dum vitant stulti vitia*—O, she is a notable woman. (*Aside.*)

Lady Con. Let me tell you, sir Bashful, there is not in the world a more ridiculous sight, than a person wrapping up himself in imaginary wisdom—If he can but guard against one giant-vice, while he becomes an easy prey to a thousand other absurdities.

Sir Bash. Lord, I am nothing at all to her in an argument! She has a tongue that can reason me out of my senses—I could almost find in my heart to tell her the whole truth.—(*Aside.*) Look'ye, madam, you know I am goodnatured at the bottom, and any thing in reason—

Lady Con. When did I desire any thing else?—Is it unreasonable to live with decency?—Is it unreasonable to keep the company I have always been used to?—Is it unreasonable to conform to the modes

of life, when our own fortune can so well afford it?—

Sir Bash. She's a very reasonable woman, and I wish I had but half her sense! (*Aside.*) I'll tell you what my lady Constant, to avoid eternal disputes, if a sum of money, within moderate compass, would make matters easy—I know you have contracted habits in life—And I know the force of habit is not easily conquer'd.—I would not have her conquer it: my pride would be hurt if she did. (*Aside.*) And so madam, if a brace of hundreds—Why should not I give her three hundred? (*Aside.*) I did not care if I went as far as three hundred—If three hundred pounds, my lady Constant, will settle the matter—Why, as to the matter of three hundred pounds—

Enter FURNISH, with a Banbox, L.H.

Fur. Your ladyship's things are come home from the milliner's. (*Showing the bandbox.*)

Sir Bash. Zookers! this woman has overheard me! (*Aside.*) As to the matter of three hundred pounds, madam. (*Loud in a passion.*) Let me tell you it is a very large sum—ask me for three hundred pounds, madam!—Do you take me for a blockhead?

Lady Con. What does the man fly out so for?

Sir Bash. What right have you to three hundred pounds? I will allow no such doings—Is not my house an eternal scene of your routs, and your drums, and your what-d'ye-call ems?—Don't I often come home when the hall is barrigadoed with powder-monkey servants, that I can hardly get within my own doors?

Lady Con. What is the meaning of all this, sir?

Sir Bash. Have not I seen you at a game at Loo, put the fee simple of a score of my best acres upon a single card?—And have not I mutter'd to myself—If that woman now were as much in love with me, as she is with Pam, what an excellent wife she would make?

Lady Con. Yes, I have great reason to love you, truly!

Sir Bash. Death and fire—You are so fond of play, that I should not wonder to see my child resemble one of the court cards, or mark'd in the forehead with a pair-royal of aces. I tell you once for all, you are an ungovernable woman—Your imaginations are as wild as any woman's in Bedlam—Do, go thither, go; for I tell you once for all, I'll allow no such doings in my house. *[Exit Sir Bash, L.H.]*

Lady Con. His head is certainly turn'd—Did any body ever see such behaviour?

Fur. See it!—no, nor bear it neither—Your ladyship will never be rightly at ease, I'm afraid, till you part with him.

Lady Con. Oh, never; it is impossible!—He not only has lost all decency, but seems to me to have bid adieu to all humanity—That it should be my fate to be married to such a quicksand! But I'll think no more of him.

Fur. Oh, madam, I had quite forgot; Mrs. Lovemore's servant is below, and desires to know if your ladyship would be at home this morning.

Lady Con. Yes, I shall be at home—Step with me to my room, and I'll give you a card to send Mrs. Lovemore—Of all things let a woman be careful how she marries a narrow-minded, under-bred husband.

[Exeunt, R.H.]

Enter SIR BASHFUL and LOVEMORE, L.H.

Sir Bash. Walk in, Mr. Lovemore, walk in!—I am heartily glad to see you!—This is kind.

Love. I am ready, you see, to attend the call of friendship.

Sir Bash. Mr. Lovemore, you are a friend indeed.

Love. You do me honour, sir Bashful—Pray how does my lady?

Sir Bash. Perfectly well!—I never saw her look better—We have had t'other brush since I saw you.

Love. Another?

Sir Bash. Ay! another!—And I did not bate her an ace—but I told you I had something for your private ear—Pray now, have you remark'd any thing odd or singular in me?

Love. Not the least—I never knew a man with less oddity in my life.

Sir Bash. What, nothing at all? He! he! (*Smiles at him.*) Have you remark'd nothing about my wife?

Love. You don't live happy with her—But that is not singular.

Sir Bash. Pho!—I tell you, Mr. Lovemore, I am at the bottom a very odd fellow.

Love. Not at all.

Sir Bash. Yes, yes, yes,—I am---I am indeed—As odd a fish as lives—And you must have seen it before now.

Love. Not I truly! You are not jealous, I hope?

Sir Bash. You have not hit the right nail o'the head—no—no—not jealous. Do her justice, I am secure there—My lady has high notions of honour. It is not that.

Love. What then?

Sir Bash. Can't you guess?

Love. Not I, upon my soul!—Explain.

Sir Bash. He, he! (*Smiling and looking simple.*) You could never have imagined it—I blush at the very thoughts of it. (*Turns away.*)

Love. Come, come, be a man, sir Bashful—out with it at once, let me be of your council—

Sir Bash. Mr. Lovemore, I doubt you, and yet esteem you—Some men there are, who when a confidence is once repos'd in them, take occasion from thence to hold a bank over their friend, and tyrannize him all the rest of his days.

Love. Oh, fie!—This is ungenerous!—True friendship is of another quality—It feels from sympathy, and is guarded by honour.

Sir Bash. Mr. Lovemore, I have no farther doubt of you—and so—Stay, stay a moment—let me just step to the door.
(*Goes on Tiptoe.*)

Love. Jealousy has laid hold of him. (*Aside.*)

Sir Bash. Servants have a way of listening.

(*Pushes the Door open with both Hands.*)

Love. He has it, through his very brain! (*Aside.*)

Sir Bash. No, no—all's safe—'There was nobody. Mr. Lovemore, I will make you the depositary—the faithful depositary, of a secret, which to you will appear a mystery—My inclinations, Mr. Lovemore—nay, but you'll laugh at me.

Love. No—upon my honour!—No—no.

Sir Bash. Well, well, well—my inclinations, I say are changed—no, not changed—but—they are not what they have appeared to be—I am in love—'Sdeath, I am quite asham'd of myself.

Love. Asham'd! Love is a noble passion—But don't tell me any more about it—my Lady Constant will find it out, and lay the blame to me—no, no—you must not involve me in a quarrel with her.

Sir Bash. Pshaw!—you don't take me right—quite wide of the mark—hear me out.

Love. I won't—indeed, I won't!—

Sir Bash. Nay, but you shall, you shall—

Love. Positively no!—Let me keep clear—She shall certainly know it, and the devil's in the dice if she does not comply with my desires from mere spirit of revenge.

Sir Bash. I tell you, Mr Lovemore—the object of my passion—(*Leading him back.*)—this charming woman, on whom I doat to distraction—

Love. I don't desire to know it.

Sir Bash. You must, you must; this adorable creature—

Love. Keep it to yourself, sir Bashful.

Sir Bash. Who looks so lovely in my eyes—is—

Love. I don't desire to know.

Sir Bash. But you shall know—is---this fine woman, is—my own wife.

Love. Your own wife! (*Stares at him.*)

Sir Bash. (*Looks silly, blushes, and turns away from him.*) Yes, my own wife.

Love. This is the most unexpected discovery—

Sir Bash. (*Fiddling and biting his nails.*) Look ye there now—he laughs at me already! (*Aside.*)

Love. And can this be possible?—Are you really in love with my lady Constant?—your own wife!

Sir Bash. Spare my confusion, Mr. Lovemore; spare my confusion—Aye, it's all over with me.

Love. I should never have guess'd this, sir Bashful.

Sir Bash. I have made myself very ridiculous, Mr. Lovemore: (*Looks at him and drops his Eyes.*) I know I have.

Love. Ridiculous!—far from it—Why, do you think it ridiculous, to love a valuable woman? Pho! Pho!—cheer up, man—and now to keep you in countenance I'll deposit a secret with you—I love my wife.

Sir Bash. What!

Love. I am in love with my wife.

Sir Bash. He! he! (*Looks at him with great Glee.*) Ha! ha!—no, no—you don't love her!—Ha! ha!—Do you, Mr. Lovemore?

Love. Upon my honour!

Sir Bash. What, love your wife?

Love. Most ardently!

Sir Bash. Give me your hand—Give me your hand! He! he! he!—I am glad to know this!

Love. I love her most sincerely—But then I never let her know it—no—nor I would not have the world know it, and therefore I have led the life I have done on purpose to conceal it.

Sir Bash. You are right, Mr. Lovemore—perfectly right—I have quarrell'd with my lady on purpose to cloak the affair, and prevent all suspicion.

Love. That was right; you should keep to that.

Sir Bash. So I intend—but I have done a thousand kindnesses in the mean time.

Love. Have ye?

Sir Bash. Aye, a thousand—She has been plaguing me this long time for a diamond cross, and diamond shoe-buckles—madam, says I, I'll hear of no such

trumpetry—But then goes me, and bespeaks them directly of the best jeweller in town---will come to three hundred—She'll have 'em this day, without knowing where they come from.

Love. Sly, sly. He! he!

Sir Bash. Let me alone; I know what I'm about—And then, Mr. Lovemore, to cover this design—Ha! ha! I can take occasion to be as jealous as Bedlam, when I see her wear'all her diamond baubles.

Love. So you can—I wish he may never be jealous of me in earnest. (Aside.)

Sir Bash. Well, well—give us your hand—give us your hand—my dear brother sufferer—I'll tell you what, Mr. Lovemore—we can, in a sly way, do each other great service, if you will come into my scheme.

Love. As how, pray?

Sir Bash. I'll tell you—There are some things, which you know our wives expect to be done—

Love. What is he at now? (Aside) So they do, sir Bashful.

Sir Bash. Now, if you will assist me—

Love. You may depend upon my assistance.

Sir Bash. Look ye, Mr. Lovemore, my lady Constant wants money—You know she keeps a great deal of company, and makes a great figure there—I could show my wife, Mr. Lovemore in any company in England; I wish she could say the same of me.

Love. Why truly, I wish she could.

Sir Bash. But I had not those early advantages—Now you know, I can't in reason be seen to give her money myself, so I would have you take the money of me, and pretend to lend it to her yourself, out of friendship and regard.

Love. Why, you're a very Machiavel—nothing was ever better contriv'd— (Aside.)

Sir Bash. Here, here, here—take the money—here it is in Bank Notes,—One, two, three—there's three hundred pounds—give her that—give her that, Mr. Lovemore—

Love. I will—This is the rarest adventure! (*Aside.*)

Sir Bash. I'll do any thing for your wife in return—

Love. Why, I may have occasion for your friendship, sir Bashful—that is to forgive me if ever you find me out. (*Aside.*)

Sir Bash. You may always command me—we'll lose no time, she's above stairs—Step to her now, and make her easy.

Love. I'll do my endeavour, that you may rely upon—I'll make her easy if possible.

Sir Bash. That's kind, that's kind!—Well, ha! ha! ha! Mr. Lovemore, is not this a rare scheme? Ha! ha! ha!

Love. 'Tis the newest way of making a wife easy—Ha! ha! ha!

Sir Bash. Ay, ay, let this head of mine alone. Ha! ha!

Love. That I won't if I can help it.

[*Exit Lovemore, R.H.*]

Sir Bash. Prosper you, prosper you, Mr. Lovemore! it is the luckiest thing in the world to have so good a friend! make me thankful!—he is a true friend. (*Sir Brilliant, Within.*) Hist---Did not I hear a noise?---Is not that sir Brilliant's voice?---I hope they won't let him in---I gave orders I would not be at home---Zookers! they are letting him in---He shan't see my lady for all that---Shan't interrupt business.

Enter SIR BRILLIANT, L.H.

Sir Bril. Sir Bashful, I kiss your hand; I rejoice to see you. And my lady, how does she do? Is she at home?

Sir Bash. Do you think I have nothing to do but to know whether she is at home or not? I don't trouble my head about her, sir.

Sir Bril. Pho! never talk so slightly of so agreeable a woman—My lady Constant has spirit, taste; sense, wit, beauty—

Sir Bash. Spirit, taste, sense, wit, beauty!—She has all that sure enough. (*Aside.*) Sir, I am no sworn appraiser to take an inventory of her effects, and set a just value upon them—I don't know what she has.

Sir Bril. Is her ladyship visible this morning?

Sir Bash. No, sir, she is invisible this morning—and unintelligible this morning—And incomprehensible this morning—She is not well—she has the vapours—She can't be spoke to—

Sir Bril. I'm sorry for it—I came to tell her the rarest piece of news, such a discovery!—

Sir Bash. Ay, what's that?

Sir Bril. You know sir Amorous La Fool?

Sir Bash. Mighty well.

Sir Bril. Poor devil! he has got into such a scrape!

Sir Bash. What's the matter! has he been bubbled at play?

Sir Bril. Worse, much worse.

Sir Bash. He is not dead.

Sir Bril. Why, that's a scrape, indeed!—But it is not that; almost as bad though.

Sir Bash. He's fallen in love with some coquette, may be?

Sir Bril. No.

Sir Bash. With some prude?

Sir Bril. Nor that.

Sir Bash. An actress may be; or an opera singer?

Sir Bril. No, you'll never guess—Like a silly devil, he has fallen in love with his own wife. Ha! ha!

Sir Bash. In love with his own wife!

(*Stares at him.*)

Sir Bril. Ha! ha!—In love with his own wife—I heard it at my lady Betty Scandal's—there was such laughing, and so much raillery—my dear sir Bashful, don't you enjoy it? Ha! ha! It's so ridiculous an affair—Is it not, sir Bashful?

Sir Bash. Ha! ha!—Oh, ay, very ridiculous indeed! Ha! ha!—nothing can be more pleasant!—Zoons! its my own case directly! (*Aside.*)

Sir Bril. The man is lost, abandon'd, ruin'd, dead, and buried—You don't laugh, sir Bashful.

Sir Bash. Who I;—I—I—I—I—laugh as heartily as I possibly can.

Sir Bril. I want to find Lovemore; he'll be so diverted. You know he does not care a pinch of snuff for his wife.

Sir Bash. No not in the least, he does not care for her—no to be sure he does not. *(Aside.)* Not he; he no more cares for his wife than I do for mine.

Sir Bril. Much the same. Poor sir Amorous! what a ridiculous figure does he make at last—adieu for him all the joys of life! the sidebox whisper, the soft assignation, and the joys of freedom!—He is retired with his Penelope, to love most heartily for a month, grow indifferent to each other in two, and hate most cordially in three—Poor devil! Ha! ha!

Sir Bash. Do you think it will end so?

Sir Bril. Most certainly. But I have not told you the worst of his case—Our friend, sir Charles Wildfire, you know, was about a comedy—now what has he done, but drawn the character of sir Amorous La Fool, and made him the hero of his piece.

Sir Bash. What! put him into a comedy!

Sir Bril. Ha! ha—Yes, he has—It is call'd, "The Amorous Husband; or the Man in love with his own Wife."—I must send in time for places—sir Bashful, you shall be of the party.

Sir Bash. With great pleasure—You may be sure it will be a very agreeable party to me—You may depend—I shall enjoy the joke prodigiously.

Sir Bril. It will be the highest scene in nature—well, a good day!—I must drive to a thousand places and put it about—farewell! *Aprèpos*, be sure you let my lady know—It will appear to her so ridiculous—

Sir Bash. Do you think it will?

Sir Bril. Certainly!—Well, your servant, your servant, your servant—Poor sir Amorous La Fool, he'll have his horns added to his coat of arms in a very little time. Ha! ha!

[Exit, L.H.]

Sir Bash. I see how it is; I shall get lampooned, be-ryhm'd, and nicked into a comedy.—Make me thankful! nobody knows of my affair, but Mr. Lovemore—He can't discover against me, for his own sake.—

Enter LOVEMORE, R.H.

Well, Mr. Lovemore, well; how have you manag'd?

Love. Just as I could wish—She is infinitely oblig'd to me, and will never forget this civility.

Sir Bash. Ten thousand thanks to you!—She suspects nothing of my being privy to it?

Love. Not the least inkling of it.—She talk'd at first something about delicacy; and thought it rather an indecorum to accept of money even from a friend—But that argument was soon silenced—I told her, I could not but see what a bad husband you was.

Sir Bash. That was right, that was right!

Love. And then I talked a few sentences to her,—As that the person receiving a civility confers the obligation—And that I was sure of wheedling you, in some goodnatur'd moment, to repay me—It was but making you my banker for a short time: and with more jargon to that purpose. And so, with some reluctance, she comply'd, and things are upon the footing I would have them.—Death and fury there's my wife!

Sir Bash. Ay, and here comes my wife, too.

Love. What the devil brings her here? (*Aside.*)

Sir Bash. This is the rarest circumstance—Now let me see how he will carry it before Mrs. Lovemore, Walk in, walk in, Mrs. Lovemore.

Enter MRS. LOVEMORE, L.H. and LADY CONSTANT, R.H.

Lady Con. Mrs. Lovemore, I'm glad to see you abroad, madam.

Mrs. Love. I am highly fortunate in meeting your ladyship at home.—Mr. Lovemore, I am glad to see you too, sir.

Love. Mrs. Lovemore, I thank you.

Sir Bash. Mind him now, mind him now—My lady Constant seems quite pleas'd—she has got the money.
(*Aside.*)

Mrs. Love. I thought you were gone into the city, Mr. Lovemore?

Love. Why will you mind me, Mrs. Lovemore—I deferred going till evening.—What the devil business had she here!
(*Aside.*)

Mrs. Love. Then I may hope you'll dine at home, sir?

Love. O lord! how can you tease a man so?

Sir Bash. Ay, ay, I see how it is—he won't let her have the least suspicion of his regard.
(*Aside.*)

Lady Con. No doubt Mr. Lovemore will dine at home, if it gives you any satisfaction—And sir Bashful, I reckon, will dine at home, for the contrary reason.

Sir Bash. Madam, I'll dine at home, or I'll dine abroad, for what reason I please: I am my own master, I hope, madam.—Lovemore, Lovemore! Ha! ha!
(*Aside---Crosses to L.H.*)

Love. Bravo!—What a silly blockhead it is!
(*Aside.*)

Mrs. Love. I see your chariot at the door, Mr. Lovemore—I'll send away my chair, and you may set me down.

Love. Ma'am, I have several places to call at.

Sir Bash. Cunning! Cunning!—He would not be seen in a chariot with her for the world.
(*Aside.*)

Lady Con. I am to have a rout to-morrow evening, Mrs. Lovemore: I wish you would favour us with your company.

Sir Bash. A rout to-morrow evening!—You have a rout every evening, I think.—I wish, madam, you would learn to imitate Mrs. Lovemore, and not make a fool of me as you do—Hip, Lovemore! Ha! ha!
(*Aside.*)

Love. Ha! ha! Bravo!—Well, I must be gone—My lady Constant, I have the honour to wish your

ladyship a good morning. Ma'am, your most obedient;
Sir Bashful, yours—Madam, you know I am yours.

[*Bows gravely to Mrs. Lovemore, and exits L.H.D.*]

Sir Bash. He carries it off finely—Make me thankful! I have kept my own secret too, and she shall never know a word of the matter.—Mrs. Lovemore, your humble servant, madam!—Madam, you know I am yours.

[*Bows gravely to lady Constant, and Exit L.H.D.*]

Mrs. Love. Two such husbands!

Lady Con. As to my swain, Mrs. Lovemore, I grant you—but you may set your mind at rest; Mr. Lovemore is at least well-bred; whereas, sir Bashful never qualifies his disrespect with the least tincture of civility.

Mrs. Love. Well, if there is any pleasure in being made miserable with civility, I must allow Mr. Lovemore a most skilful hand.—I have found out another of his intrigues, and I came on purpose to consult with your ladyship about it: There is a Widow Bellmour to whom he pays his addresses.

Lady Con. The Widow Bellmour!—

Mrs. Love. But first give me leave, lady Constant, to tell you the whole circumstances of the affair.

Lady Con. All scandal, take my word for it.—But, if I must hear your story, let us adjourn the debate to my dressing-room, and I will promise to confute your whole accusation.—My dear Mrs. Lovemore, are you not tending a little towards jealousy?—Beware of that, ma'am; you must not look through that medium:

*That jaundice of the mind, whose colours strike
On friend and foe, and paint them all alike.*

[*Exeunt, R. H.*]

ACT III.—SCENE I.

A Room at the WIDOW BELLMOUR's, in which are disposed, up and down, several Chairs, a Toilette, a Bookcase, and a Harpsichord;—MIGNIONET, her Maid, is settling the Toilette.

Mig. I don't well know what to make of this same lord Etheridge—He is coming here again to-day, I suppose; all this neatness, and all this care, must be for him. Well it does not signify, there is a pleasure in obeying Madam Bellmour—She is a sweet lady, that's the truth of it. 'Twere a pity any of these men, with their deceitful arts, should draw her into a snare—But she knows them all—They must rise early, who can outwit her.

Enter MRS. BELLMOUR, R.H. reading a Volume of Pope.

*Oh! blest with temper, whose unclouded ray,
Can make to-morrow, cheerful as to-day;
She who can own a sister's charms, and hear
Sighs for a daughter, with unwounded ear;
That never answers, till a husband cools,
And if she rules him, never shows she rules:*

Sensible, elegant Pope!

*Charms by accepting, by submitting sways,
Yet has her humour most, when she obeys.*
(*Seems to read on.*)

Mig. Lord love my mistress! She's always so happy and so gay.

Mrs. Bell. These charming characters of women!—'Tis like a painter's gallery, where one sees the portraits of all one's acquaintance and sometimes one sees one's own likeness too.—Here, Mignonet, put this book in its place.

Mig. Yes, ma'am.—There, ma'am, you see your toilette looks most charmingly.

Mrs. Bell. Does it?—I think it does.—Apropos, Where's my new song?—Here it lies--- I must make myself mistress of it.---Mignonet, do you know that this is a very pretty song---'tis written by my lord Etheridge;---I positively must learn it before he comes.---(*Sings a line.*) Do you know, Mignonet, that I think my lord not wholly intolerable.

Mig. Yes, ma'am, I know that.

Mrs. Bell. Do you?

Mig. And if I have any skill, ma'am, I fancy you think him more than tolerable.

Mrs. Bell. Really! then you think I like him, I suppose?---Do you think I like him?---I don't well know how that is,---and yet I don't know but I do like him;---no,---no,---I don't like him neither,---not absolutely like---but I could like, if I had a mind to humour myself.—The man has a softness of manner, an elegant turn of thinking, and has a heart—has he a heart?—yes, I think he has;—and then he is such an observer of the manners,—and shows the ridiculous of them with so much humour.

Mig. Without doubt, ma'am, my lord is a pretty man enough; but lack-a-day, what o'that?—You know but very little of him,—your acquaintance is but very short—(*Mrs. Bellmour hums a Tune.*) Do, pray, my dear madam, mind what I say,—for I am at times, I assure you, very speculative,—very speculative indeed; and I see very plainly—Lord, ma'am, what am I doing?—I am talking to you for your own good, and you are all in the air, and no more mind me, no, no more, than if I was nothing at all.—

Mrs. Bell. (*Humms a Tune still.*) Why, indeed, you talk wonderfully well upon the subject.—Do you think I shall play the fool, Mignonet, and marry my lord?

Mig. You have it, ma'am, through the very heart of you—I see that.

Mrs. Bell. Do you think so?—May be I may marry, and may be not.—Poor sir Brilliant Fashion,—What will become of him?—But I won't think about it.

Enter POMPEY, L.H.

What's the matter, Pompey?

Pom. There's a lady below in a chair, that desires to know if you are at home, madam?

Mrs. Bell. Has the lady no name?

Pom. She did not tell me her name.

Mrs. Bell. How awkward you are!—Well, show her up. *[Exit Pompey, L.H.]*

Mig. Had not you better receive the lady in the drawing-room, ma'am?—Things here are in such a confusion—

Mrs. Bell. No it will do very well here. I dare say it is somebody I am intimate with, though the fool does not recollect her name.—Here she comes. No!

Enter MRS. LOVEMORE, L.H. They both look with a grave Surprise at each other, then curtsy with an Air of distant Civility.

Mrs. Bell. Ma'am, your most obedient.

(With a Kind of Reserve.)

Mrs. Love. Ma'am, I beg your pardon for this intrusion. *(Disconcerted.)*

Mrs. Bell. Pray ma'am, walk in—Won't you please to be seated?—Mignonet, reach a chair.

(Mrs. Lovemore crosses the Stage, and they salute each other.)

Mrs. Love. I'm afraid this visit, from one unknown to you, will be inconvenient and troublesome.

Mrs. Bell. Not at all, I dare say;—you need not be at the trouble of an apology—Mignonet, you may withdraw. *[Exit Mignonet, R.H.]*

Mrs. Love. Though I have not the pleasure of your acquaintance, ma'am, there is a particular circumstance which has determined me to take this liberty with you; for which I intreat your pardon.

Mrs. Bell. The request is wholly unnecessary;—but a particular circumstance, you say.

Mrs. Love. I shall appear perhaps very ridiculous, and indeed I am afraid I have done the most absurd thing—But, ma'am, from the character you bear for tenderness of disposition and generosity of sentiment, I easily incline to flatter myself, you will not take offence at any thing; and that if it is in your power, you will afford me your assistance.

Mrs. Bell. You may depend upon me.

Mrs. Love. I will be very ingenuous:—Pray, ma'am a'nt you acquainted with a gentleman whose name is Lovemore?

Mrs. Bell. Lovemore!—No!—no such person in my list.—Lovemore!—I don't know him, ma'am.

Mrs. Love. Ma'am, I beg your pardon—I won't trouble you any further. (*Going.*)

Mrs. Bell. 'Tis mighty odd, this—(*Aside.*) Madam, I must own my curiosity is a good deal excited;—(*Takes her by the hand.*) Pray ma'am give me leave—I beg you will sit down,—pray don't think me impertinent—may I beg to know who the gentleman is?

Mrs. Love. You have such an air of frankness and generosity, that I will open myself to you.—I have been married to him these two years; I admired my husband for his understanding, his sentiment, and his spirit; I thought myself as sincerely loved by him as my fond heart could wish; but there is of late such a strange revolution in his temper, I know not what to make of it.—Instead of the looks of affection, and expressions of tenderness, with which he used to meet me, 'tis nothing now but cold, averted, superficial civility.—While abroad, he runs on in a wild career of pleasure; and to my deep affliction, has fixed his affections upon another object.

Mrs. Bell. If you mean to consult with me in regard to this case, I am afraid you have made a wrong choice;—there is something in her appearance that affects me—(*Aside.*) Pray excuse me, ma'am, you consider this matter too deeply—Men will prove false, and if there is nothing in your complaint but mere gallantry on his side,—upon my word, I can't think your case the worse for that.

Mrs. Love. Not the worse!

Mrs. Bell. On the contrary, much better. If his affections, instead of being alienated, had been extinguished, he would have sunk into a downright stupid, habitual insensibility; from which it might prove impossible to recal him.—In all love's bill of mortality, there is not a more fatal disorder.

Mrs. Love. I am afraid, ma'am, he is too much the reverse of this, too susceptible of impressions from every beautiful object.

Mrs. Bell. Why, so much the better, as I told you already;—some new idea has struck his fancy, and he will be for a while under the influence of that.

Mrs. Love. How light she makes it! (*Aside.*)

Mrs. Bell. But it is the wife's business to bait the hook for her husband with variety, and to draw him daily to herself:—that is the whole affair, I would not make myself uneasy, ma'am.

Mrs. Love. Not uneasy! when his indifference does not diminish my regard for him!—Not uneasy! when the man I doat on no longer fixes his happiness at home!

Mrs. Bell. Ma'am, you'll give me leave to speak my mind freely.—I have often observed, when the fiend jealousy is roused, that women lay out a wonderful deal of anxiety and vexation to no account; when perhaps, if the truth were known, they should be angry with themselves instead of their husbands.

Mrs. Love. Angry with myself, madam!—calumny can lay nothing to my charge,—the virtue of my conduct, madam— (*Rises.*)

Mrs. Bell. Oh, I would have laid my life, you would be at that work—that's the folly of us all.—But virtue is out of the question at present. It is *la belle Nature*.—Nature embellished by the advantages of art, that the men expect now-a-days;—and really ma'am, without compliment, you seem to have all the qualities that can dispute your husband's heart with anybody! but the exertion of those qualities, I am afraid, is suppressed.—You'll excuse my freedom, I have been married, ma'am, and am a little in the secret.—It is much more difficult to keep a heart than win one—After the fatal words, "For better for worse," the general way with wives is, to relax into indolence, and while they are guilty of no infidelity, they think that is enough:—but they are mistaken; there is a great deal wanting—an address, a manner, a desire of pleasing—

Mrs. Love. But when the natural temper—

Mrs. Bell. The natural temper must be forced—home must be made a place of pleasure to the husband, and the wife must throw infinite variety into her manner. And this, I take to be the whole mystery, the way to keep a man.—But I run on at a strange rate—Well, to be sure, I'm the giddiest creature.—Ma'am, will you now give me leave to inquire, how I came to have this favour?—Who recommended me to your notice?—And pray who was so kind as to intimate that I was acquainted with Mr. Lovemore?

Mrs. Love. I beg your pardon for all the trouble I have given you, and I assure you, 'tis entirely owing to my being told that his visits were frequent here.

Mrs. Bell. His visits frequent here!—They have imposed upon you, I assure you—and they have told you, perhaps, that I have robbed you of Mr. Lovemore's heart?—Scandal is always buzzing about; but, I assure you, I have not meddled with his heart—*(Knock within.)* O lud! I hear a rap at the door—I positively won't be at home.

Enter MIGNIONET, L.H.

Mig. Did you call, madam?

Mrs. Bell. I am not at home.

Mig. 'Tis lord Etheridge, ma'am,—he's coming up stairs; the servants told him you were within.

Mrs. Bell. Was ever any thing so cross? Tell him, there is company with me, and he won't come in.—Mignionet, run to him.

Mrs. Love. Ma'am, I beg I mayn't hinder you.

Mrs. Bell. Our conversation begins to grow interesting, and I would not have you go for the world.—I won't see my lord.

Mrs. Love. I beg you will—don't let me prevent—I'll step into another room.

Mrs. Bell. Will you be so kind?—There are books in that room, if you will be so obliging as to amuse yourself there. I shall be glad to resume this conversation again.—He shan't stay long.

Mrs. Love. I beg you will be in no hurry—I can wait with pleasure.

Mrs. Bell. This is a lover of mine; and a husband and a lover should be treated in the same manner;—perhaps it will divert you to hear how I manage him. I hear him on the stairs—for Heaven's sake, make haste. Mignionet, show the way.

[*Exeunt Mrs. Lovemore and Mignionet, R.H.D.*

Mrs. Bell. Let me see how I look to receive him.—
(*Runs to her glass.*—)

Enter LOVEMORE, L.H. with a Star and Ribband, as LORD ETHERIDGE,

(*Looking in her Glass.*) Lord Etheridge! Walk in, my lord.

Love. (*Repeats.*) *A heav'nly image in the glass*
appears,

To that she bends, to that her eyes she rears;
Repairs her smiles—

Mrs. Bell. Repairs her smiles, my lord! I don't like your application of that phrase—Pray, my lord, are my smiles out of repair; like an old house in the country, that wants a tenant?

Love. Nay now, that's wresting the words from their visible intention.—You can't suppose I thought you want repair, whatever may be the case, ma'am, with regard to the want of a tenant?

Mrs. Bell. And so you think I really want a tenant? And perhaps you imagine too, that I am going to put up a bill, (*Looking in her glass.*) to signify to all passers by, that here is a mansion to let?—Well, I swear, I don't think it would be a bad scheme.—I have a great mind to do so.

Love. And he who has the preference—

Mrs. Bell. Will be very happy—I know you mean so. But I'll let it to none but a single gentleman, that you may depend upon.

Love. What the devil does she mean by that! She has not got an inkling of the affair, I hope. (*Aside.*) None else could presume, madam, to—

Mrs. Bell. And then, it must be a lease for life—But nobody will be troubled with it—I shall never get it off my hands.—Do you think I shall, my lord?

Love. Why that question, madam? You know I am devoted to you, even if it were to be bought with life.

Mrs. Bell. Heav'ns! what a dying swain you are! And does your lordship really intend to be guilty of matrimony?—Lord, what a question have I asked?—Well, to be sure, I am a very mad-cap!—My lord, don't you think me a strange mad-cap?

Love. A wildness, like yours, that arises from vivacity and sentiment together, serves only to exalt your beauty, and give new poignancy to every charm.

Mrs. Bell. Well, upon my word, you have said it finely!—But you are in the right, my lord,—I hate your pensive, melancholy beauty, that sits like a well-grown vegetable in a room for an hour together, 'till at last she is animated to the violent exertion of saying

yes, or no, and then enters into a matter-of-fact conversation.—“Have you heard the news? Miss Beverly is going to be married to captain Shoulderknot. My lord Mortgage has had another tumble at Arthur’s. Sir William Squanderstock has lost his election. They say, short aprons are coming into fashion again.”

Love. O lord! a matter-of-fact conversation is insupportable.

Mrs. Bell. Pray, my lord, have you ever observed the manner of one lady’s accosting another at Ranelagh?—She comes up to you with a demure look of insipid serenity,—makes you a solemn salute—“Ma’am, I am overjoyed to meet you,—you look charmingly.—But, dear ma’am, did you hear what happened to us all the other night?—We were going home from the opera, ma’am—you know my aunt Rolypoly—it was her coach—there was she, and lady Betty Fidget—Your most obedient servant, ma’am—Courtesying to another, as it were going by.—Lady Betty, you know, is recovered—every body thought it over with her—but doctor Snakeroot was called in—no, not doctor Snakeroot, doctor Bolus it was—and so he altered the course of medicine—and so my lady Betty recovered:—Well, there was she and sir George Bragwell,—a pretty man, sir George—finest teeth in the world—Your ladyship’s most obedient. We expected you last night, but you did not come—he! he!—And so, there was he and the rest of us,—and so, turning the corner of Bond Street, the villain of a coachman—How do you do, madam?—the villain of a coachman overturning us all;—my aunt Rolypoly was frightened out of her wits, and lady Betty has been nervish ever since:—Only think of that,—such accidents in life.—Ma’am, your most obedient—I am proud to see you look so well.”

Love. An exact description—the very thing—Ha! ha!

Mrs. Bell. And then, from this conversation they all run to cards,—“Quadrille has murdered wit.”

Love. Ay, and beauty too; for upon these occa-

sions, "the passions in the features are—" I have seen many a beautiful countenance change in a moment into absolute deformity; the little loves and graces, that before sparkled in the eye, bloom'd in the cheek, and smil'd about the mouth, all fly off in an instant, and resign the features which they before adorn'd, to fear, to anger, to grief, and the whole, train of fretful passions.

Mrs. Bel. Ay, and the rage we poor women are often betrayed into on these occasions—

Love. Very true, ma'am; and if by chance they do bridle and hold in a little, the struggle they undergo is the most ridiculous sight imaginable.—I have seen an oath quivering upon the pale lip of a reigning toast, for half an hour together, and then at last, when the whole room burst out into one loud universal uproar—"My lord, you flung away the game—No, ma'am, it was you—Sir George, why did not you rough the diamond?—Captain Hazard, why did not you lead through the honour?—Ma'am, it was not the play.—Pardon me, sir—But, ma'am—But, sir,—I would not play with you for straws.—Don't you know what Hoyle says?—If A and B are partners against C and D, and the game nine-all, A and B have won three tricks, and C and D four tricks, C leads his suit, D puts up the king, then returns the suit, A passes, C puts up the queen, B trumps the next:" And so, A and B, and C and D, are banged about, and all is jargon, confusion, uproar, and wrangling, and nonsense, and noise.—Ha! ha!

Mrs. Bell. Ha! ha! A fine picture of a rout;—but one must play sometimes—we must let our friends pick our pockets sometimes, or they'll drop our acquaintance.—Pray, my lord, do you never play?

Love. Play ma'am!—I must lie to the end of the chapter—(*Aside.*) play! now and then, out of necessity:—otherwise, I never touch a card.

Mrs. Bell. Oh! very true, you dedicate your time to the muses; a downright rhyming peer.—Do you know my lord, that I am charmed with your song?

Love. Are you?

Mrs. Bell. I am indeed. I think you'd make a very tolerable Vauxhall poet.

Love. You flatter me, ma'am.

Mrs. Bell. How do I look, But don't tell me I won't be told.—I see you are studying a compliment, and I hate compliments;—well, what is it? let's hear your compliment—why don't you compliment me?—won't hear it now.—But pray now, how came you to chuse so grave a subject as connubial happiness?

Love. I am afraid she begins to suspect me.—*(Aside.)* A very scanty knowledge of the world will serve: and there is no need of one's own experience in these cases:—and when you, ma'am, are the original, it is no wonder that this copy—

Mrs. Bell. O lard, you are going to plague me again with your odious solicitations, but I won't hear them;—you must be gone.—If I should be weak enough to listen to you, what would become of sir Brilliant Fashion?

Love. Sir Brilliant Fashion!

Mrs. Bell. Yes don't you know sir Brilliant Fashion?

Love. No, ma'am, I don't know the gentleman:—I beg pardon, if he is your acquaintance, but from what I have heard of him, I should not chuse him to be among my intimates.

Enter MIGNIONET, in a violent Hurry, R.H.D.

Mig. O, undone! undone!

Mrs. Bell. What's the matter?

Mig. O lud! I am frightened out of my senses!—The poor lady—Where's the hartshorn drops?—

Love. The lady! What lady?

Mig. Never stand asking what lady—she has fainted away, ma'am, all of a sudden.—Give me the drops.

[Exit, R.H.D.]

Mrs. Bell. Let me run to her assistance—Adieu.

my lord.—I shall be at home in the evening—My lord, you'll excuse me! I expect you in the evening.

[*Exit, R.H.D.*]

Love. I shall wait on you, ma'am.—What a villian am I to carry on this scheme against so much beauty, innocence and merit.—Ay, and to have the impudence to assume this badge of honour, to cover the most unwarrantable purposes!—But no reflection—have her I must, and that quickly too.—If I don't prevail soon, I am undone—she'll find me out:—egad, I'll be with her betimes this evening, and press her with all the vehemence of 'love.—Women have their soft, unguarded moments, and who knows?—But to take the advantage of the openness and gaiety of her heart! And then my friend sir Brilliant, will it be fair to supplant him?—Pr'ythee, be quiet, my dear conscience; don't you be meddling; don't you interrupt a gentleman in his amusements. Don't you know, my good friend, that love has no respect of persons, knows no laws of friendship;—besides, 'tis all my wife's fault—why don't she strive to make home agreeable?

*For foreign pleasures, foreign joy, I roam,
No thought of peace, or happiness at home.*

(*Going, L.H.D.*)

(*Sir Brilliant is heard singing within, L.H.D.*)

What the devil is madam Fortune at now?—Sir Brilliant, by all that's odious?—No place to conceal in!—No escape!—The door is lock'd!—Mignonet, Mignonet! open the door!

Mig. (*Within, R.H.D.*) You can't come in here, sir.

Love. This cursed star, and this ribband, will ruin me.—Let me get off this confounded tell-tale evidence.
(*Takes off the Ribband in a Hurry.*)

Enter SIR BRILLIANT, L.H.D.

Sir Bril. My dear madam, I most heartily rejoice in you!—Lovemore!

Love. Ah! Sir Brilliant, is it you.

(Hiding the Star with his hat.)

Sir Bril. How is this?—I did not think you had been acquainted here!

Love. I came to look for you,—I thought to have found you here;—and so I have scrap'd an acquaintance with the lady, and made it subservient to your purposes.—I have been giving a great character of you.

Sir Bril. Well, but what's the matter?—What are you fumbling about? *(Pulls the Hat.)*

Love. 'Sdeath, have a care!—for Heaven's sake—*(Crums his handkerchief there.)*

Sir Bril. What the devil ails you?

Love. Taken so unaccountably; my old complaint—

Sir Bril. What complaint?

Love. I must have a surgeon,—occasioned by the stroke of a tennis-ball;—my lord Rackett's unluck left hand.—Let me pass—there is something forming there—let me pass.—To be caught is the devil.—*(Aside.)* Don't name my name, you'll ruin all that said for you, if you do.—Sir Brilliant, your servant—There is certainly something forming. *[Exit, L.H.]*

Sir Bril. Something forming there—I believe there is something forming here!—What can this mean?—I must have this explain'd.—Then Mrs. Lovemore's suspicions are right; I must come at the bottom of it.

Enter MRS. BELLMOUR, R.H.D.

My dear Mrs. Bellmour!—

Mrs. Bell. Heavens! What brings you here?

Sir Bril. I congratulate with myself upon the city of meeting you thus at home.

Mrs. Bell. Your visit is unseasonable—you must be gone.

Sir Bril. Madam I have a thousand things—

Mrs. Bell. Well, well, another time.

Sir Bril. Of the tenderest import.

Mrs. Bell. I can't hear you now;—fly this moment!—I have a lady taken ill in the next room.

Sir Bril. Ay, and you have had a gentleman taken ill here too.

Mrs. Bell. Do you dispute my will and pleasure?—fly this instant. (*Turns him out. L.H.D.*) So—I'll make sure of the door.

Enter MRS. LOVEMORE, R.H.D. leaning on MIGNIONER.

Mig. This way, madam, here's more air in this room.

Mrs. Bell. How do you find yourself, ma'am? Pray sit down. (*She sits.*)

Mrs. Love. My spirits are too weak to bear up any longer against such a scene of villainy?

Mrs. Bell. Villainy! What villainy?

Mrs. Love. Of the blackest dye!—I see, madam, you are acquainted with my husband.

Mrs. Bell. Acquainted with your husband!

Mrs. Love. A moment's patience;—that gentleman that was here with you, is my husband! (*Rises.*)

Mrs. Bell. Lord Etheridge your husband!

Mrs. Love. Lord Etheridge, as he calls himself, and as you have been made to call him also, is no other than Mr. Lovemore.

Mrs. Bell. And has he then been base enough to assume that title, to ensnare me to my undoing?

Mrs. Love. To see my husband carrying on this dark business,—to see the man I have loved—the man I have esteem'd—the man I am afraid I must still love, though esteem him again I cannot, to be a witness to his complicated wickedness, it was too much for sensibility like mine—I felt the shock too severely, and sunk under it.

Mrs. Bell. I am ready to do the same myself now—I sink into the very ground with amazement. The first time I ever saw him, was at Mrs. Loveit's—she introduced him to me; the appointment was of her own making.

Mrs. Love. You know her character, I suppose, madam?

Mrs. Bell. She's a woman of fashion, and sees a great deal of good company.

Mrs. Love. Very capable of such an action for all that.

Mrs. Bell. Well, I could never have imagined that any woman would be so base as to pass such a cheat upon me.—Step this moment, and give orders never to let him within my doors again.

[*Exit Mignonet, L.H.D.*

I am much obliged to you, madam for this visit ;—to me it is highly fortunate, but I am sorry for your share in't, as the discovery brings you nothing but the conviction of your husband's baseness.

Mrs. Love. I am determined to be no further uneasy about him ; nor will I live a day longer under his roof.

Mrs. Bell. Hold ! hold ! make no violent resolutions.—You'll excuse me—I can't help feeling for you, and I think this incident may be still converted to your advantage.

Mrs. Love. That can never be—I am lost beyond redemption.

Mrs. Bell. Don't decide that too rashly.—Besides, you have heard his sentiments.—Perhaps you are a little to blame yourself. We will talk this matter over coolly—Ma'am, you have saved me, and I must now discharge the obligation.—you shall stay and dine with me.

Mrs. Love. I can't possibly do that—I won't give you so much trouble.

Mrs. Bell. It will be a pleasure, ma'am—you shall stay with me—I will not part with you ; and I will lay such a plan as may ensure him yours for ever.—Come, come, my dear madam, don't you still think he has some good qualities to apologize for his vices ?

Mrs. Love. I must own, I still hope he has.

Mrs. Bell. Very well then, and he may still make atonement for all ;—and, let me tell you, that a man who can make proper atonement for his faults, should

not be entirely despised.—Allons—Come, come, a man
 's worth thinking a little about, before one throws the
 hideous thing away for ever. [*Exeunt, R.H.D.*]

END OF ACT. III.

• ACT IV.

SCENE I.—*Sir Bashful Constant's.*

Enter LADY CONSTANT, *with a Card*, and FURNISH,
 R.H.

— *Lady Con.* Is the servant waiting ?

Fur. He is, madam.

Lady Con. Very well—I need not write—Give my
 humble service to Mrs. Lovemore, and I shall certainly
 wait on her.

Fur. I shall, madam. (*Going.*)

Lady Con. Has the servant carried back the things
 to sir Brilliant Fashion, as I ordered ?

Fur. We expect him back every moment, madam.

Lady Con. The insolence of that man, to think he
 can bribe me with his odious presents !—Very well, go
 and send my answer to Mrs. Lovemore.—[*Exit Fur-*
nish, L.H.] What can this mean ? (*Reads.*)

Begs the favour of her ladyship's company to
cards this evening.—Cards at Mrs. Lovemore's--there's
 something new in that.—(*Reads.*) *Hopes her ladyship*
will not refuse, as it is a very particular affair re-
quires Mrs. Lovemore's friends to be present.—
 There is some mystery in all this—What can it be ?—

Enter SIR BASHFUL CONSTANT, L.H.

Sir Bash. Here she is—Now let me see whether

she will take any notice of the diamond buckles—Your servant, madam.

Lady Con. Your servant, sir.

Sir Bash. You seem out of humour, I think.

Lady Con. And considering that you never give me cause, that's very strange, is it not?

Sir Bash. My lady Constant, if you did not give me cause.—

Lady Con. For Heaven's sake, sir, let us have no more disagreeable altercation—I am tired of your violence of temper; your frequent starts of passion, and unaccountable fancies, which you too often mistake for realities.

Sir Bash. Fancies, madam! When do I take fancies for realities?—Do I only fancy that you are eternally making exorbitant demands upon me for money, for the various articles of your expences? And when you were for ever teasing me for diamonds, and I know not what, was that a fancy I had taken into my head without foundation?

Lady Con. Pray, sir, let us not dispute—I promise you, never to trouble you on that head again.

Sir Bash. She has received them I see, and is obstinately resolved not to tell me. (*Aside.*) Madam, I will not render myself ridiculous in the eyes of the world, for your whims.

Lady Con. Nor will I, sir, be ridiculous any longer on account of your caprice.—I have wrote to my solicitor to attend me here to-morrow morning with the articles of separation; and I presume, sir, that you can have no objection to their being carried into execution.—I have no time now to squander in frivolous debates, I must prepare to go out.—Your servant, sir.

[*Exit, R.H.*]

Sir Bash. I must unburden myself at last!—Must disclose the secrets of my heart—She has possessed my very soul;—is ever present to my imagination;—mingles with all my thoughts;—inflames my tenderest passions, and raises such a conflict here—I cannot any

longer keep this fire pent up—I'll throw myself open to her this very moment—Is any body in the way?

Enter SIDEBORD, R.H.

Where's your mistress?

Side. In her own room, sir.

Sir Bash. Draw that table over this way—A letter will do the business—It shall be so.—Reach me a chair.—You blockhead, why don't you reach a chair?

Side. There, your honour.

Sir Bash. Do you stay while I write a letter—You shall carry it for me. (*He sits down to write.*)

Side. Yes, sir—I hope he has got some intrigue upon his hands—A servant always thrives under a master that has his private amusements.—Love on, say I, if you are so given; it will all bring grist to my mill.

(*Aside.*)

Sir Bash. This will be a strange surprise upon my lady Constant—Soft, passionate, and tender, so far,—and yet it does not come up to what I feel. It is a hard thing in excessive love like mine, to speak as delicately as we think, to the person that we adore. (*Writes on.*)

Side. Let me see if there is any news in the paper of to-day. (*Takes a Newspaper out of his Pocket and reads.*) What in the name of wonder is all this?—O lord! O lord!—I can't help laughing—Ha! ha!—I never heard of the like before—Ha! ha!

Sir Bash. What does this rascal mean? (*Stares at him.*) He does not suspect me, does he?

Side. Ha! ha! ha!

Sir Bash. (*Stares still at him.*) Perhaps he overheard my conversation with Mr. Lovemore—Hark'ye, sirrah! (*Rises.*) if ever I find that you dare listen at any door in the house, I'll cut your ears off, I will.

Side. Sir!—

Sir Bash. Confess the truth;—have not you been listening and overhearing my conversation?

Side. Who, I sir?—Not I, sir; as I hope to live, sir,

I would not be guilty of such a thing, sir, for ever so much—I never did the like in my born days.

Sir Bash. What was you laughing at, rascal?

Side. An article, sir, I found in the newspaper, that's all, sir—I'll read it to you, sir— (*Reads.*)

We hear that a new comedy is now in rehearsal at one of the theatres, and will speedily be perform'd, entitled, The Amorous Husband; or, The Man in Love with his own Wife.

Sir Bash. Sir Brilliant told me truth, I see. (*Aside.*)—Well, and what do you see to laugh at there, sir?

Side. Lord bless me, sir, I never heard of the like before,—I have served in a great many families, and I never heard of such a thing.

Sir Bash. Lookye there now!—(*Aside.*) Sirrah! let me never hear that you have the trick of listening at any of my doors.

Side. No, sir—to be sure, sir—What has he got in his head?

Sir Bash. Wounds! I shall be laugh'd at by my own servants.—But no more scruples—pass that by; it shall all out— (*Sits down.*) That fellow has so disconcerted me!—There, I have laid my whole heart open to her—I'll seal it directly.—Here, take this, and bring me an answer—And, do you hear?—come hither—mind what I say; take care that nobody sees you.

Side. I warrant, sir. [*Exit Sideboard, L.H.*]

Sir Bash. I feel at if a load was off my breast—and yet I fear—but I'm embark'd, and so I'll wait the event.

Enter **SIDEBOARD, L.H.**

Side. A word or two by way of direction, sir, would not be amiss.

Sir Bash. Blockhead!—Have not I directed it?

(*Takes it back.*)

Side. I could never have suspected him of having an intrigue. (*Aside.*)

Sir Bash. This rascal does not know the secret of

my heart, and he shall remain so—Lovemore shall open the affair to her—I am glad I have not trusted him—should I direct this, the fellow would find me out—You may go about your business, Sideboard—I don't want you.

Side. Very well, sir—what's he at now?—If he does not let me manage his intrigues for him, I'll give him warning. [Exit, L.H.D.]

Sir Bash. Ay, Mr. Lovemore shall do it—the explanation will be more natural and easy from him.—This scoundrel is coming again—no, it is not he.

Enter LOVEMORE, L.H.D.

Sir Bash. Ha! Mr. Lovemore!—I am glad to see you!—Mr. Lovemore, you are heartily welcome!

Love. You see me here this second time to-day, sir Bashful, entirely on the score of friendship.

Sir Bash. I thank you, Mr. Lovemore; heartily thank you!

Love. I broke away from company on purpose to attend you—they would have had me stay the evening,—but I have more pleasure in serving my friends—Well, how does my lady?

Sir Bash. We don't hit at all, Mr. Lovemore.

Love. No?

Sir Bash. No, no—not at all—I think she has been rather worse since you spoke to her.

Love. A good symptom, that. (Aside.)

Sir Bash. She still talks of parting; and has even sent to her lawyer about it.—Obstinate as a mule, Mr. Lovemore!—has had the diamond buckles, and sulky still—not one word about them.

Love. Time will bring things about—

Sir Bash. Pho! there is not a moment to be lost.—She is set upon it, Mr. Lovemore; and when she sets in, she blows like a trade wind, all one way,—and so, to prevent extremities, I have e'en thought of explaining myself to her.

Love. What! acquaint her with your passion?

Sir Bash. Yes, and trust to her honour.—I know I could not do it myself in person—I should blush, and look silly and falter—So I e'en set down to write her a letter—here it is, Mr. Lovemore, signed and sealed—but it is not directed—I got into a puzzle about that—for my servant, you know, would wonder at my writing a letter to her.

Love. So he would.

Sir Bash. Yes, yes, he would have smok'd me,—but you are come most opportune—I'll tell you what, you shall direct it and send it to her—Nobody will be a jot the wiser.

Love. Well, I'll take it home with me, and send it to her to-morrow morning.

Sir Bash. No, no; now, directly now.

Love. I'll step to her then and speak for you—Why should you send a letter—If it does not take, she has you in her power—you can't go back—She'll have it under your hand.

Sir Bash. Why, that's true—that's true—And yet if I can obtain a letter from her, I shall have it under her hand.—It must be so—If you go, she'll send a verbal answer by you, and then deny it afterwards.

Love. But I shall be a witness against her.

Sir Bash. That will never do—I shall this way draw her in to write a letter, and then I shall have her bound down.

Love. Better take a little time to consider of it.

Sir Bash. No, no, I can't defer it a moment; it burns like a fever here—I must have immediate relief; Mr. Lovemore, you must be my friend—Sit you down, and direct it for me—I'll step and send my servant to carry it for you—Sit down, sit down.

Enter SIDEBORD. L.H.D.

Side. Sir Brilliant Fashion, sir, is below.

Sir Bash. Sir Brilliant Fashion!—Rascal! why did you say I was at home?

Side. I had no orders to the contrary, sir.

Love. 'Sdeath, he must not come up—Step to him, sir Bashful; amuse him, talk to him, tell him the news, any thing, rather than let him come hither to interrupt us.

Sir Bash. No, no, he shan't come up.

Love. By no means; and be sure you don't let him know that I am here—The fellow follows me every where I go. *(Aside.)*

Sir Bash. Never fear—He shan't come near you—and in the mean time, be sure you direct the letter.

Love. I will; but you lose time; away; begone! *(Pushes him out, L.H.D.)* A lucky accident this—I have gain'd time by it—what in the name of wonder has he wrote to her?—I am defeated if this preposterous fellow brings things to an explanation—matters were in a fine train, and he himself levelling the road for me; and now, if this takes, I am blown up into the air at once: some unlucky planet rules to day—First the Widow Bellmour—and now this will-o'-the-wisp—what can he have wrote to her?—Friendship and wafer, by your leave—but will that be delicate? No—but 'twill be convenient. *(Opens it.)* This letter shall never go—I'll write another myself—a lucky thought!—I absolve my stars—here is every thing ready—*(Sits down.)*—What shall I say?—Any thing will do—

(Reads and writes.)

Why should I conceal, my dear madam, that your charms have touch'd my heart?—Um—loved you long; adored—Um—Um—flatter—Um—Um—Um—happiest of mankind—Um—Um—Um—sweetest revenge—Um—Um—husband—Um—Um---Um—Um---Um! ---Secret pleasure of rewarding the tenderness of your sincerest admirer,
LOVEMORE.
 This will do---Let me seal it, and now direct it.

Enter SIR BASHFUL CONSTANT, L.H.D.

Sir Bash. Well, well, have you sent it?

THE WAY

Love. No. Your servant has not been with me yet.

Sir Bash. Sideboard ! why don't you wait on the gentleman as I ordered---Sideboard---I have got rid of sir Brilliant.

Love. Have you ?

Sir Bash. Yes, yes, I would not let him come up for the world.

Enter SIDEBOARD, L.H.

Sir Bash. Here, Sirrah ! Mr. Lovemore wants you.

Love. Master Sideboard, you must step to your lady with this letter.

Sir Bash. Charming ! charming ! Ha ! ha ! (*Aside.*) You must take it up to her directly.

Side. Take it up, sir ; my lady's in the next room.

Sir Bash. Is she ? then take it in there then, to her ---make haste---begone ! [*Exit Sideboard, R.H.*]

Love. No danger in this, she'll know her own interest, and have prudence to conceal every thing.

(*Aside.*)

Sir Bash. I hope this will succeed, Mr. Lovemore.

Love. I hope it will.

Sir Bash. I shall for ever be oblig'd to you—and so will my lady too.

Love. I dare believe she won't prove ungrateful.

Sir Bash. Hush ! hush !—I should like to see how she receives it—See, the door is conveniently open. (*Goes on Tiptoe to the Door.*) Yes, yes, I can see her—there she sits. (*Peeping.*)

Love. Methinks, I should like to observe her too.

(*Aside.*)

Sir Bash. Hush—no noise.

Love. Now, my dear boy, Cupid, incline her heart.

(*Aside.*)

Sir Bash. She has got it ! She has got it !—I am frightened out of my wits !

Love. Hold your tongue—She opens it.—My dear Venus, now or never ! (*Aside.*)

Sir Bash. She colours.

Love. I like that rising blush—A tender token.

Sir Bash. She turns pale!

Love. The natural working of the passions.

Sir Bash. And now she reddens again—In disorder too—Death and fury, she tears the letter!—I'm undone! (*Walks away from the Door.*)

Love. She has flung it from her with indignation—I'm undone too! (*Goes from the Door.*)

Sir Bash. Mr. Lovemore you see what it's all come to!

Love. I am sorry to see it come to this, indeed.

Sir Bash. Did you ever see such an insolent scorn?

Love. I never was so disappointed in all my life.

Sir Bash. An absurd, ungrateful woman!

Love. Ungrateful indeed!—To make such a return to so kind a letter.

Sir Bash. Yes, to so kind a letter.

Love. So full of the tenderest protestations.

Sir Bash. You say right—the tenderest protestations!

Love. So generous, so unreserved a declaration of love!

Sir Bash. Made with the greatest openness of heart—throwing one's self at her feet.

Love. Very true; throwing one's self at her very feet.

Sir Bash. And then to be spurned, kicked, and treated like a puppy!

Love. Ay, there it stings—to be treated like a puppy!

Sir Bash. I can't bear this!—My dear Mr. Lovemore, do you know in nature a thing so mortifying to the pride of man, as to be rejected and despised by a fine woman?

Love. Oh, 'tis the damn'dest thing in the world—makes a man look so mean in his own eyes.

Sir Bash. Mr. Lovemore, I'm heartily obliged to you for taking this affair so much to heart.

Love. I take it more to heart than you are aware of, I assure you.

Sir Bash. You are very kind indeed—This is enough to make one ashamed all the rest of one's life.
(Both speak these broken Sentences in a Kind of Recoverie.)

Enter SIR BRILLIANT, L.H.D.

Sir Bril. Sir Bashful, sir Bashful! I forgot to tell you the highest thing—Hey! what's the matter here?

Love. 'Sdeath! what brings him here again?
(Aside.)

Sir Bril. You seem both out of humour.

Sir Bash. The blockheads of servants to let him in.
(Aside.)

Sir Bril. Upon my soul, but this is very odd!—Perhaps Lovemore is borrowing money of you, sir Bashful, and you can't agree about the premium?

Sir Bash. Pressing business, sir Brilliant.

Sir Bril. Pho! pho!—he's a very honest fellow; let him have the money—By the way, Lovemore, I have a crow to pluck with you.

Love. Well, well, another time.—He haunts me up and down like my evil genius! *(Aside.)*

Sir Bril. Well, but you both look very grave upon it.—As you will;—you have not the same reason to be in harmony with yourselves that I have—Here, here!—I came back on purpose to tell you—*(Takes a Shagreen Case out of his Pocket.)* See here, my boys! See what a present has been made me!—A magnificent pair of diamond buckles, by Jupiter!

Love. How!

Sir Bash. A pair of diamond buckles!

Sir Bril. A pair of diamond buckles, sir:—How such a thing should be sent to me, I can't conceive—but so it is—The consequence of having some tolerable phrase, a person, and being attentive to the service of the ladies.

Sir Bash. And this was sent you as a present?

Sir Bril. Ay, as a present.—Do you envy me?

Sir Bash. I can't say but I do—My buckles, Mr. Lovemore, by all that's false in woman.

(*Aside to LOVEMORE.*)

Love. Ay, he's the happy man, I see. (*Aside.*)

Sir Bril. Both burning with envy, by Jupiter!

(*Aside.*)

Sir Bash. But may not this be from some lady, that imagines you sent them to her, and so she chuses to reject your present?

Sir Bril. No, no,—no such thing!—Had I presented the buckles, they would never have been returned.—Ladies don't reject presents, my dear sir Bashful, from the man that is agreeable in their eyes.

Sir Bash. So I believe—What a jade it is!

(*Aside.*)

Love. She would not have torn a letter from him.

(*Aside.*)

Sir Bril. No, no, had I sent them to a lady, take my word for it, they would have been very acceptable.

Sir Bash. So I suppose—I make no doubt but she'll give him my three hundred pounds too! (*Aside.*)

Love. That he should be my rival, and overtop me thus! (*Aside.*)

Sir Bash. And pray now, sir Brilliant—I suppose you expect to have this lady?

Sir Bril. This is the forerunner of it, I think.—Ha! ha! Sir Bashful! Mr. Lovemore, this it is to be in luck!—Ha! ha! ha! (*Laughs at both.*)

Sir Bash. } Ha! ha! (*Forcing a Laugh.*)

Love.

Sir Bash. Very well, my lady Constant!—very well, madam—very well! (*Aside.*)

Sir Bril. I swear you both are strangely piqued at my success—Sir. Bashful, observe how uneasy Lovemore looks.

Love. You wrong me, sir:—I—I—I—I am not uneasy.

Sir Bash. He's a true friend—He's uneasy on my account. (*Aside.*)

Sir Bril. Upon my soul, but you are uneasy!—and, my dear sir Bashful, you repine at my success.

Sir Bash. Yes, sir, I do—I own it.

Sir Bril. Well, you're not disposed to be good company—I'll leave you.—Lovemore, where do you spend the evening?

Love. I can't say, sir;—I believe I shall stay here.

Sir Bril. Nay, nay, if you are so snappish—I am glad to hear that, I am engaged to his wife. (*Aside.*) Is it not a rare present, sir Bashful? (*Pulling him by the sleeve.*) Thou dear pledge of love, let me lay thee close to my heart.

[*Exit Sir Brilliant, looking at the case, L.H.D.*]

Sir Bash. What think ye now, Lovemore?

Love. All unaccountable to me, sir.

Sir Bash. Unaccountable!—"Tis too plain—my wife's a jade.

Love. I'm glad she has torn my letter, however.

(*Aside.*)

Sir Bash. By all that's false, I'm gulled, cheated, imposed upon, deceived, and dubbed---Ay, here her ladyship comes---And now she shall hear her own.

Love. 'Sdeath! let me fly the approaching storm---sir Bashful, your humble servant, sir—I wish you a good night. (*Going.*)

Sir Bash. You must not go---you shan't leave me in this exigence---you shall be a witness of our separation.

Love. No, I can't bear the sight of her after what has passed---Good night---(*Sir Bashful holds him.*) Damnation! I must weather it! (*Aside.*)

•
Enter LADY CONSTANT, R.H.

Lady Con. I am surprised, Mr. Lovemore, that you will offer to stay a moment longer in this house!

Love. How the devil shall I give a turn to this affair? (*Aside.*)

Sir Bash. Mr. Lovemore is my friend, madam; and I desire he'll stay here as long as he pleases, madam.

Love. All must come out. (*Aside.*)

Lady Con. Your friend, sir Bashful---And do you authorize him to make sport of me, sir?---I wonder, Mr. Lovemore, you would think of sending me such a letter!---Do you presume, sir, upon my having admitted a trifling act of civility from you?---Do you come disguised, sir, under a mask of friendship to undo me?

Love. It's a coming! (*Aside.*)

Sir Bash. A mask of friendship!---I know Mr. Lovemore too well, and I desired him to send that letter.

Love. Sir Bashful desired me, madam.

Sir Bash. I desired him, madam.

Love. He desired me, madam.

Lady Con. What to affront me, sir?

Sir Bash. There was not one word of truth in it.

Love. Not one word of truth, madam.

Sir Bash. It was all done to try you, madam; merely to know you a little or so.

Love. Merely to know you! pure innocent mirth.

Lady Con. And am I to be treated thus, sir; to be ever tormented by you?—And could you, Mr. Lovemore, be so unmanly as to make yourself an accomplice in so mean an attempt to ensnare me?

Sir Bash. To ensnare me!—She calls it ensnaring—It is pretty plain from all that has pass'd between us that our tempers are not fit for one another; and I now tell you that I am ready to part as soon as you please. Nay I will part.

Lady Con. That is the only thing we can agree in, sir.

Sir Bash. Had that letter come from another quarter, I know it would have been highly acceptable.

Lady Con. I disdain the imputation!

Sir Bash. I will vent no more reproaches---This is the last of our conversing together---And take this with you, by the way, you are not to believe one word of that letter--And as to any passion, that any body declares for you, there was no such thing---was there Lovemore? (*Goes over to him.*)

Love. He states it all very right, madam.

Sir Bash. Let us laugh at her, Lovemore. Ha! ha! ha!

Love. Silly devil!—I can't help laughing at him.
(*Aside.*) Ha! ha! ha!

Sir Bash. Ha! ha! ha!—all a barn, madam!—ha; ha! nothing else in the world!—all to make sport of you. Ha! ha! ha!

Lady Con. I cannot bear this usage any longer—Two such brutes! Is my chair ready there?—You may depend, sir, this is the last you will see of me in your house. [*Exit Lady Constant, R.H.*]

Sir Bash. A bargain, madam, with all my heart!—Ha! ha! Lovemore this was well managed.

Love. Charming! managed, indeed!—I did not think you had so much spirit in you.

Sir Bash. I have found her out—I know her at last.—But, Mr. Lovemore, never own the letter; deny it to the last.

Love. You may depend upon me.

Sir Bash. I return you a thousand thanks.—A foolish woman, how she stands in her own light.

Love. Truly, I think she does.—Sir Bashful, I am mighty sorry I could not succeed better in this affair.

Sir Bash. And so am I.

Love. I have done my best, you see—and now I'll take my leave.

Sir Bash. Nay, stay a little longer.

Love. Had your lady proved tractable, I should not care how long I staid—but as things are situated, your humble servant, sir Bashful.—Well off this bout—well off! (*Aside.*)

Sir Bash. Mr. Lovemore, your servant; a good night to you—But harkye, Mr. Lovemore; if I can serve you with your lady—

Love. I thank you as much as if you did.

Sir Bash. Be sure you deny every thing.—Fare you well.—[*Exit Lovemore, L.H.*] He is a true friend indeed! I should have been undone but for him—My lady Constant! my lady Constant!—let me drive

her from my thoughts.—Can I do it?—Rage, fury, love,—think no more of love—I never will own a tittle of that letter.—Odso! yonder it lies in fragments upon the ground—I'll pick them up this moment—keep them safe in my own custody—And, as to sir Brilliant, I shall know how to proceed with madam in regard to him—I'll watch them both—if I can but get ocular demonstration of her guilt.—If I can but get the means in my power, to prove to the whole world that she is vile enough to cuckold me, I shall be happy.

[*Exit, R.H.*]

• END OF ACT IV.

ACT V.

SCENE I.—*An apartment at Mr. Lovemore's.*

Enter MRS. LOVEMORE, R.H. elegantly dressed, MUSLIN following her.

Mus. Why to be sure, ma'am; it is so for certain, and you are very much in the right of it.

Mrs. Love. I fancy I am: I see the folly of my former conduct, and I am determined never to let my spirits sink into a melancholy state again.

Mus. Why, that's the very thing, ma'am; the very thing I have been always preaching up to you. Did not I always say, see company; Ma'am, take your share of pleasure, and never break your heart for any man. This is what I always said.

Mrs. Love. It's very well, you need not say any more now.

Mus. I always said so. And what did the world say? Heavens bless her for a sweet woman! and a plague

go with him for an inhuman, barbarous, murdering brute.

Mrs. Love. No more of these liberties, I desire. ✓

Mus. Nay, don't be angry: they did say so indeed. But, dear heart, how every body will be overjoy'd, when they find you have pluck'd up a little! As for me, it gives me new life, to have so much company in the house, and such a racketing at the door with coaches and chairs, enough to hurry a body 'out of one's wits. —Lard, this is another thing, and you look quite like another thing, ma'am, and that dress quite becomes you,---I suppose, ma'am, you will never wear your negligée again. It is not fit for you, indeed, ma'am.--- It might pass very well with some folks, ma'am, but the like of you---

Mrs. Love. P'r'ythee truce with your tongue, and see who is coming up stairs.

Enter MRS. BELLMOUR, L.H.

Mrs. Bellmour, I revive at the sight of you. Muslin, do you step down stairs, and do as I have ordered you.

Mus. What the deuce can she be at now?

[*Exit, L.H.*

Mrs. Bell. You see I am punctual to my time.--- Well, I admire your dress of all things. It's mighty pretty.

Mrs. Love. I am glad you like it. But, under all this appearance of gaiety, I have at the bottom but an aching heart.

Mrs. Bell. Be ruled by me, have courage, courage, and I'll answer for the event. Why, really, now you look just as you should do.—Why should you neglect so fine a figure?

Mrs. Love. You are so civil, Mrs. Bellmour!

Mrs. Bell. And so true too—What was beautiful before, is now heightened by the additional ornaments of dress; and if you will but animate and inspire the whole by those graces of the mind, which I am sure

you possess, the impression cannot fail of being effectual upon all beholders, and even upon the depraved mind of Mr. Lovemore.—You have not seen him since, have you?

Mrs. Love. No—not a glimpse of him.

Mrs. Bell. If he does but come home time enough, depend upon it my plot will take. Well, and have you got together a good deal of company?

Mrs. Love. Pretty well.

Mrs. Bell. That's right: show him that you will consult your own pleasure.---Is sir Brilliant of the party?

Mrs. Love. Apropos, as soon as I came home I received a letter from him; He there urges his addresses with great warmth, begs to see me again, and has something particular to tell me---you shall see it.---O lud, I have not it about me!---I left it in my dressing-room, I believe; you shall see it by and by: I took your advice, and sent him word he might come. That lure brought him hither immediately: he makes no doubt of his success with me.

Mrs. Bell. Well! two such friends as sir Brilliant and Mr. Lovemore, I believe, never existed!

Mrs. Love. Their falsehood to each other is unparalleled. I left sir Brilliant at the whist table: as soon as the rubber is out, he'll certainly quit his company in pursuit of me. Apropos---my lady Constant is here.

Mrs. Bell. Is she?

Mrs. Love. She is, and has been making the strangest discovery; Mr. Lovemore has had a design there too!

Mrs. Bell. Lud a mercy! what would have become of the poor man, if he had succeeded with us all?

Mrs. Love. (*A rap at the door.*) As I live and breathe, I believe this is Mr. Lovemore.

Mrs. Bell. If it is, every thing goes on swimmingly within.

Mrs. Love. I hear his voice; it is he! How my heart beats!

Mrs. Bell. Courage, and the day's your own
Where must I run?

Mrs. Love. In there, ma'am. Make haste; I heard his step on the stair-head.

Mrs. Bell. Success attend you. I am gone.

[*Exit, R.H.D.*]

Mrs. Love. I am frightened out of my senses
What the event may be I fear to think; but I must go through with it.

Enter LOVEMORE, L.H.

Mr. Lovemore, you are welcome home.

Love. Mrs. Lovemore, your servant.

(*Without looking at her*

Mrs. Love. It is somewhat rare to see you at home so early.

Love. I said I would come home, did not I? I always like to be as good as my word.---What could she mean by this usage? to make an appointment, and break it thus abruptly! (*Aside.*)

Mrs. Love. He seems to muse upon it. (*Aside.*)

Love. She does not mean to do so infamous a thing as to jilt me? (*Aside.*) O, lord! I am wonderfully tired. (*Yawns, and sinks into an arm chair.*)

Mrs. Love. You aren't indisposed, I hope, my dear

Love. No, my dear; I thank you, I am very well---a little fatigued only, with jolting over the stones all the way from the city. I drank coffee with the banker. I have been there ever since I saw you.---Confoundedly tired.---Where's William?

Mrs. Love. Do you want any thing?

Love. Only my slippers. I am not in spirits, think. (*Yawns.*)

Mrs. Love. You never are in spirits at home, Mr. Lovemore.

Love. I beg your pardon: I never am any where more cheerful. (*Stretching his Arms.*) I wish I might die if I am't very happy at home,---very (*Yawns*) very happy!

Mrs. Love. I can hear otherwise. I am informed, that Mr. Lovemore is the inspirer of mirth and good humour wherever he goes.

Love. O! you overrate me; upon my soul you do.

Mrs. Love. I can hear, sir, that no person's company is so acceptable to the ladies; that 'tis your wit that inspires every thing: that you have your compliment for one; your smile for another, a whisper for a third, and so on, sir; you divide your favours, and are every where, but at home, all whim, vivacity, and spirit.

Love. No! no! (*Laughing,*) how can you talk so? I swear I can't help laughing at the fancy. All whim, vivacity, and spirit! How can you banter so?—I divide my favours' too!—O, Heavens! I can't stand this raillery: such a description of me!—I that am rather saturnine, of a serious cast, and inclined to be pensive! I can't help laughing at the oddity of the conceit.—O lord! O lord!

(*Laughs and crosses to R.H.*)

Mrs. Love. Just as you please, sir. I see that I am ever to be treated, with indifference.

(*Walks across the stage.*)

Love. (*Rises and walks the contrary way.*) I can't put this Widow Bellmour out of my head. (*Aside.*)

Mrs. Love. If I had done any thing to provoke this usage, this cold insolent contempt— (*Walking.*)

Love. I wish I had done with that business entirely; but my desires are kindled, and must be satisfied. (*Aside.*)

(*They walk for some time silently by each other.*)

Mrs. Love. What part of my conduct gives you offence, Mr. Lovemore?

Love. Still harping upon that ungrateful string!—---but pr'ythee don't set me a laughing again.—Offence!—nothing gives me offence, child!—you know I am very fond—(*Yawns and walks.*)---I like you of all things, and think you a most admirable wife,---prudent, managing,---careless of your own person, and very attentive of mine;---not much addicted to ple-

sure,---grave, retired, and domestic; govern your house, pay the tradesmen's bills, (*Yawns.*) scold the servants, and love your husband:---upon my soul, a very good wife! as good a sort of a wife (*Yawns.*) as a body might wish to have.---Where's William?---I must go to bed.

Mrs. Love. To bed so early! Had not you better join the company?

Love. I shan't go out to-night.

Mrs. Love. But I mean the company in the drawing room.

Love. What company? (*Stares at her.*)

Mrs. Love. That I invited to a rout.

Love. A rout in my house!--and you dressed out too!--What is all this?

Mrs. Love. You have no objection, I hope.

Love. Objection!--No, I like company, you know, of all things; I'll go and join them: who are they all?

Mrs. Love. You know them all; and there's your friend, sir Brilliant, there.

Love. Is he there? I'm glad of it. But, pray now, how comes this about?

Mrs. Love. I intend to do it often.

Love. Do you?

Mrs. Love. Ay, and not look tamely on, while you revel luxuriously in a course of pleasure. I shall pursue my own plan of diversion.

Love. Do so, do so, ma'am: the change in your temper will be very pleasing.

Mrs. Love. I shall, indeed, sir. I'm in earnest.

Love. By all means follow your own inclinations.

Mrs. Love. And so I shall, sir, I assure you.

(*Sings and crosses to, L.H.*)

Love. What the devil is the matter with her? And what in the name of wonder does all this mean?

Mrs. Love. Mean, sir!--It means--it means--it means--it means--how can you ask me what it means? --Well, to be sure, the sobriety of that question!--Do you think a woman of spirit can have leisure to tell

her meaning, when she is all air, alertness, pleasure, and enjoyment. (*Crosses to, R.H.*)

Love. She is mad!—Stark mad!

Mrs. Love. You're mistaken, sir,—not mad, but in spirits, that's all. No offence, I hope—Am I too flighty for you?—Perhaps I am—you are of a saturnine disposition, inclined to think a little or so. Well, don't let me interrupt you : don't let me be of any inconvenience. That would be the unpolitest thing ; for a married couple to interfere and encroach on each other's pleasures ! O hideous ! it would be gothic to the last degree. Ha ! ha ! ha !

Love. (*Forcing a laugh.*) Ha ! ha !---Ma'am, you ---ha ! ha ! you are perfectly right.

Mrs. Love. Nay, but I don't like that laugh now ; I positively don't like it. Can't you laugh out as you were used to do ? For my part, I'm determined to do nothing else all the rest of my life.

Love. This is the most astonishing thing ! ma'am, I don't rightly comprehend---

Mrs. Love. Oh lud ! oh lud !---with that important face ! Well, but come, now ; what don't you comprehend ?

Love. There is something in this treatment that I don't so well---

Mrs. Love. Oh are you there, sir ! How quickly hey, who have no sensibility for the peace and happiness of others, can feel for themselves, Mr. Love-more !---But that's a grave reflection, and I hate reflection.

Love. What has she got into her head ? This sudden change, Mrs. Lovemore, let me tell you, is a little alarming, and---

Mrs. Love. Nay, don't be frightened ; there is no harm in innocent mirth, I hope ? Never look so grave upon it. I assure you, sir, that though, on your part, you seem determined to offer constant indignities to your wife, and though the laws of retaliation would in some sort exculpate her, if when provoked to the utmost, exasperated beyond all enduring, she should,

in her turn, make him know what it is to receive injury in the tenderest point---

Love. Madam !

(*Angrily*)

Mrs. Love. Well, well, don't be frightened, I say, shan't retaliate : my own honour will secure you the you may depend upon it---You won't come and play game at cards ? Well, do as you like ; well, you won't come ? No, no, I see you won't---What say you to a bit of supper with us?---Nor that neither ?---Follow your inclinations : it is not material where a body eats---the company expects me ; Your servant, Mr. Love more, yours, yours. [Exit---singing, R.]

Love. This is a frolic I never saw her in before !--Laugh all the rest of my life !--laws of retaliation !--an injury in the tenderest point !--the company expects me.--Your servant, my dear !--yours, yours (*Mimicking her.*) What the devil is all this ? Some of her female friends have been tampering with the Zounds, I must begin to look a little sharp after the lady. I'll go this moment into the card room, and watch whom she whispers with, whom she ogles with and every circumstance that can lead to--- (*Going.*)

Enter MUSLIN in a hurry, L.H.

Mus. Madam, madam,--here's your letter ; I won't for all the world that my master--

Love. What, is she mad too ? What's the matter with the woman ?

Mus. Nothing, sir,--nothing : I wanted a word with my lady, that's all, sir.

Love. You would not for the world that your master--What was you going to say ?--what paper's that ?

Mus. Paper, sir !

Love. Paper, sir ! Let me see it.

Mus. Lard, sir ! how can you ask a body for such a thing ? It's a letter to me, sir, a letter from the country--a letter from my sister, sir. She bids me to buy her a shiver de fize cap, and a sixteenth in the lottery ; and tells me a number she dreamt of, that's all, sir : I'll put it up.

Love. Let me look at it. Give it me this moment
(*Reads.*) *To Mrs. Lovemore! Brilliant Fashion.*

This is a letter from the country, is it?

Mus. That, sir—that is—no, sir,—no,—that's not my sister's letter.—If you will give me that back, sir, I'll show you the right one.

Love. Where did you get this?

Mus. Sir?

Love. Where did you get it?—Tell me truth—

Mus. Dear heart, you fright a body so—in the parlour, sir—I found it there.

Love. Very well!--leave the room.

Mus. The devil fetch it, I was never so out in my politics in all my days. [*Exit, L.H.*]

Love. A pretty epistle truly this seems to be---Let me read it.

(*Reads.*) *Permit me dear madam, to throw myself on my knees, for on my knees I must address you, and in that humble posture, to implore your compassion.---Compassion with a vengeance to him---Think you see me now with tender, melting, supplicating eyes, languishing at your feet.---Very well, sir.---Can you find it in your heart to persist in cruelty?---Grant me but access to you once more, and in addition to what I already said this morning I will urge such motives---Urge such motives, will ye?---as will suggest to you, that you should no longer hesitate in gratitude to reward him, who still on his knees, here makes a vow to you of eternal constancy and love.* *Brilliant Fashion.*

So! so! so! your very humble servant, sir Brilliant Fashion!—This is your friendship for me, is it?—You are mighty kind, indeed, sir,—but I thank you as much as if you had really done me the favour: and Mrs. Lovemore, I'm your humble servant too. She intends to laugh all the rest of her life! This letter will change her note: Yonder she comes along the gallery, and sir Brilliant in full chase of her. They come this way. Could I but detect them both now! I'll step aside: and who knows but the devil may tempt them to their undoing. At least I'll try.

A polite husband I am : there's the coast clear for you, madam.
[Exit, L.H.S.E.]

Enter MRS. LOVEMORE, R.H. SIR BRILLIANT, *following*.

Mrs. Love. I tell you, sir Brilliant, your civility is odious ; your compliments fulsome ; and your solicitations impertinent, sir.—I must make use of harsh language, sir : you provoke it, and I can't refrain.

Sir Bril. Not retiring to solitude and discontent again, I hope, madam ! Have a care, my dear Mrs. Lovemore, of a relapse.

Mrs. Love. No danger of that, sir : don't be so solicitous about me. Why would you leave the company ! Let me entreat you to return, sir.

Sir Bril. By Heaven, there is more rapture in being one moment *vis-a-vis* with you, than in the company of a whole drawing-room of beauties. Round you are melting pleasures, tender transports, youthful loves, and blooming graces, all unfelt, neglected, and despised, by a tasteless, cold, languid, unimpassioned husband, while they might be all so much better employed to the purposes of ecstasy and bliss.

Mrs. Love. I desire, sir Brilliant, you will desist from this unequalled insolence. I am not to be treated in this manner ;—and I assure you, sir, that were I not afraid of the ill consequences that might follow, I should not hesitate a moment to acquaint Mr. Lovemore with your whole behaviour.

Sir Bril. She won't tell her husband then !—A charming creature, and blessings on her for so convenient a hint. She yields, by all that's wicked ; what shall I say to overwhelm her senses in a flood of nonsense ?
(Aside.)

Go, my heart's envoy's, tender sighs, make haste,—
 Still drink delicious poison from thy eye,—

Raptures and paradise

Pant on thy lip, and to thy heart be press'd.

(Forcing her all this Time.)

Enter MR. LOVEMORE, L.H.S.E.

Love. Zoons, this is too much.

Sir Bril. (*Kneels down to buckle his Shoe.*) This confounded buckle is always plaguing me. My dear boy, Lovemore! I rejoice to see thee.

(*They stand looking at each other.*)

Love. And have you the confidence to look me in the face?

Sir Bril. I was telling your lady, here, of the most whimsical adventure—

Love. Don't add the meanness of falsehood to the black attempt of invading the happiness of your friend. I did imagine, sir, from the long intercourse that has subsisted between us, that you might have had delicacy enough, feeling enough, honour enough, sir, not to meditate an injury like this.

Sir Bril. Ay, it's all over, I am detected! (*Aside.*) Mr. Lovemore, if begging your pardon for this rashness will any way atone—

Love. No, sir, nothing can atone.

Sir Bril. But, Mr. Lovemore—

Love. But, sir,—

Sir Bril. I only beg—

Love. Pray, sir,—sir, I insist—I won't hear a word.

Sir Bril. I declare, upon my honour—

Love. Honour! for shame, sir Brilliant, don't mention the word.

Sir Bril. If begging pardon of that lady—

Love. That lady!—I desire you will never speak to that lady.

Sir Bril. Nay, but pr'ythee, Lovemore.

Love. Poh! poh! don't tell me, sir—

(*Walks about in Anger.*)

Enter SIR BASHFUL, L.H.D.

Sir Bash. Did not I hear loud words among you? I certainly did. What are you quarrelling about?

Love. Read that, sir Bashful. (*Gives him sir Brilliant's Letter.*) Read that, and judge if I have not cause—

(*Sir Bashful reads to himself.*)

Sir Bril. Hear but what I have to say—

Love. No, sir, no; I have done with you for the present.—As for you, madam, I am satisfied with

your conduct—I was indeed a little alarmed, but I have been a witness of your behaviour, and I am above harbouring low suspicions.

Sir Bash. Upon my word Mr. Lovemore, this is carrying the jest too far.

Love. Sir, it is the basest action a gentleman can be guilty of?

Sir Bash. Why so I think. *Sir Brilliant, (Aside.)* here, take the letter, and read it to him; his own letter to my wife.

Sir Bril. Let me have it. *(Takes the Letter.)*

Sir Bash. 'Tis indeed, 'as you say, the worst thing a gentleman can be guilty of.

Love. 'Tis an unparalleled breach of friendship.

Sir Bril. Well, I can't see any thing unparalleled in it: I believe it will not be found to be without a precedent—as for example— *(Reads.)*

To my Lady Constant—

Why should I conceal, my dear madam, that your charms have touched my heart—

Love. Zoons! my letter— *(Aside.)*

Sir Bril. (Reading.) I long have loved you, long adored. Could I but flatter myself—

Sir Bash. The basest thing a man can be guilty of, Mr. Lovemore!

Love. All a forgery, sir; all a forgery.

(Snatches the Letter.)

Sir Bash. That I deny; it is the very identical letter my lady threw away with such indignation.—My lady Constant, how have I wronged you!—That was the cause of your taking it so much to heart, Mr. Lovemore, was it?

Love. A mere contrivance, to palliate his guilt. Poh! poh! I won't stay a moment longer among ye. I'll go into another room to avoid ye all. *(Opens R.H.D.)* Hell and distraction!—what fiend is conjured up here? Zoons! let me make my escape out of the house. *(Runs to the opposite door.)*

Mrs. Love. I'll secure this door; you must not go, my dear.

Love. 'Sdeath, madam, let me pass!

Mrs. Love. Nay, you shall stay : I want to introduce an acquaintance of mine to you.

Love. I desire, madam—

Enter MRS. BELLMOUR, R.H.D.

Mrs. Bell. My lord, my lord Etheridge ; I am heartily glad to see your lordship. (*Taking hold of him.*)

Mrs. Love. Do, my dear, let me introduce this lady to you. (*Turning him to her.*)

Love. Here's the devil and all to do ! (*Aside.*)

Mrs. Bell. My lord this is the most fortunate encounter—

Love. I wish I was fifty miles off. (*Aside.*)

Mrs. Love. Mrs. Bellmour, give me leave to introduce Mr. Lovemore to you. (*Turning him to her.*)

Mrs. Bell. No, my dear madam, let me introduce lord Etheridge to you. (*Pulling him.*) My lord—

Sir Bril. In the name of wonder, what is all this ?

Sir Bush. Wounds ! is this another of his intrigues blown up ?

Mrs. Love. My dear ma'am, you are mistaken : this is my husband.

Mrs. Bell. Pardon me, ma'am, 'tis my lord Etheridge.

Mrs. Love. My dear, how can you be so ill-bred in your own house ?—Mrs. Bellmour,—this is Mr. Lovemore.

Love. Are you going to toss me in a blanket, madam ?—call up the rest of your people, if you are.

Mrs. Bell. Pshaw ! pry'thee now, my lord, leave off your humours. Mrs. Lovemore this is lord Etheridge, a lover of mine, who has made proposals of marriage to me. Come, come, you shall have a wife : I will take compassion on you.

Love. Damnation ! I can't stand it. (*Aside.*)

Mrs. Bell. Come, cheer up, my lord : what the deuce, your dress is altered ! what's become of the star and riband ? And so the gay, the florid, the magnificent lord Etheridge dwindles down into plain Mr.

Lovemore, the married man! Mr. Lovemore, you most obedient, very humble servant, sir.

Love. I can't bear to feel myself in so ridiculous a circumstance. (*Aside.*)

Sir Bash. He has been passing himself for a lord has he?

Mrs. Bell. I beg my compliments to your friend Mrs. Loveit: I am much obliged to you both for your very honourable designs. (*Courtesying to him.*)

Love. I was never so ashamed in all my life! (*Aside.*)

Sir Bril. So, so, so, all his pains were to hide the star from me.

Mrs. Bell. Mrs. Lovemore, I cannot sufficiently acknowledge the providence that directed you to pay me a visit, and I shall henceforth consider you as my deliverer.

Love. Zoons! It was she that fainted away in the closet, and he damn'd to her jealousy. (*Aside.*)

Sir Bril. My lord. (*Advances to him.*) My lord, my lord Etheridge, as the man says in the play, "Your lordship's right welcome back to Denmark."

Love. Now he comes upon me.— (*Aside.*)

Sir Bril. My lord, I hope that ugly pain in your lordship's side is abated.

Love. Absurd, and ridiculous. (*Aside.*)

Sir Bril. There is nothing forming there, I hope my lord.

Love. Damnation! I can't bear all this—I won't stay to be teased by any of you—I'll go to the company in the card-room! (*Goes to the door in the back Scene.*) Here is another fiend! I am beset with them.

Enter LADY CONSTANT, M.D.

No way for an escape?—

(*Attempts both Stage doors, and is prevented.*)

Lady Con. I have lost every rubber I play'd for—it broke. Do, Mr. Lovemore, lend me another hundred.

e. I would give a hundred you were all in Nova

Lady Con. Mrs. Lovemore, let me tell you, you are married to the falsest man;—he has deceived me strangely.

Mrs. Love. I begin to feel for him, and to pity his uneasiness. (*Aside to Mrs. Bell.*)

Mrs. Bell. Never talk of pity; let him be probed to the quick. (*Aside to Mrs. Lovemore.*)

Sir Bash. The case is pretty plain, I think now, sir Brilliant.

Sir Bril. Pretty plain, upon my soul—Ha! ha!

Love. I'll turn the tables upon sir Bashful, for all this---(*Takes sir Bashful's letter out of his pocket.*) Where is the mighty harm now, in this letter?

Sir Bash. Where is the harm?---Ha! ha! ha!

Love. (*Reads.*) *I cannot, my dearest life, any longer behold---*

Sir Bash. Shame and confusion! I am undone.

(*Aside.*)

Love. Hear this, sir Bashful---*I cannot, my dearest life, any longer behold the manifold vexations, of which, through a false prejudice, I am myself the occasion---*

Sir Bash. 'Sdeath! I'll hear no more of it.

(*Snatches at the letter.*)

Love. No, sir; I resign it here, where it was directed.

Lady Con. For Heaven's sake, let us see---It is his hand, sure enough!

Love. Yes, madam, and those are his sentiments.

Sir Bash. I can't look any body in the face.

All. Ha! ha!—

Sir Bril. So, so, so! he has been in love with his wife all this time, has he? Sir Bashful, will you go and see the new comedy with me? Lovemore, pray now don't you think it a base thing to invade the happiness of a friend? or to do him a clandestine wrong? or to injure him with the woman he loves?

Love. To cut the matter short with you, sir, we are both villains!

Sir Bril. Villains!

Love. Ay, both! we are pretty fellows indeed!

Mrs. Bell. I am glad to find you are awakened to sense of your error.

Love. I am, madam, and am frank enough to own it. I am above attempting to disguise my feeling when I am conscious they are on the side of truth and honour. With sincere remorse I ask your pardon—should ask pardon of my lady Constant too, but the truth is, sir Bashful threw the whole affair in my way and, when a husband will be ashamed of loving a valuable woman, he must not be surprised, if other people take her case into consideration, and love her for him.

Sir Bril. Why, faith, that does in some sort apologize for him.

Sir Bash. Sir Bashful! Sir Bashful! thou art ruined! (*Aside.*)

Mrs. Bell. Well, sir, upon certain terms, I don't know but I may sign and seal your pardon. (*To Love*

Love. Terms!—what terms?

Mrs. Bell. That you make due expiation of your guilt to that lady. (*Pointing to Mrs. Lovemore.*)

Love. That lady, ma'am!—That lady has no reason to complain.

Mrs. Love. No reason to complain, Mr. Lovemore.

Love. No, madam, none; for whatever may have been my imprudences, they have had their source in your conduct.

Mrs. Love. In my conduct, sir!

Love. In your conduct:—I here declare before this company, and I am above palliating the matter! I hereby declare, that no man in England could be better inclined to domestic happiness, if you, madam, on your part had been willing to make home agreeable.

Mrs. Love. There, I confess, he touches me.

(*Aside.*)

Love. You could take pains enough before marriage you could put forth all your charms; practise all your arts; for ever changing; running an eternal round of variety, to win my affections, but when you had won them, you did not think them worth your keeping: never dressed, pensive, silent, melancholy; and the entertainment in my house was the dear pleasure

of a dull conjugal tete-a-tete; and all this insipidity, because you think the sole merit of a wife consists in her virtue: a fine way of amusing a husband, truly!

Sir Bril. Upon my soul, and so it is— (*Laughing.*)

Mrs. Love. Sir, I must own there is too much truth in what you say. This lady has opened my eyes, and convinced me there was a mistake in my former conduct.

Love. Come, come, you need say no more. I forgive you: I forgive.

Mrs. Love. Forgive! I like that air of confidence, when you know, that, on ~~my~~ side, it is, at worst, an error in judgment; whereas, on yours—

Mrs. Bell. Poh! poh! never stand disputing: you know each other's faults and virtues: you have nothing to do but to mend the former, and enjoy the latter. There, there, kiss and be friends. There, Mrs. Lovemore, take your reclaimed libertine to your arms.

Love. 'Tis in your power, madam, to make a reclaimed libertine of me indeed.

Mrs. Love. From this moment it shall be our mutual study to please each other.

Love. A match with all my heart. I shall hereafter be ashamed only of my follies, but never shall be ashamed of owning that I sincerely love you.

Sir Bash. Shan't you be ashamed?

Love. Never, sir.

Sir Bash. And will you keep me in countenance?

Love. I will.

Sir Bash. Give me your hand. I now forgive you all, from the bottom of my heart. My lady Constant, I own the letter, I own the sentiments of it; (*Embraces her.*) and from this moment I take you to my heart.— Lovemore, zookers! you have made a man of me!

Sir Bril. And now, Mr. Lovemore, may I presume to hope for pardon at that lady's hands?

(*Points to Mrs. Lovemore.*)

Love. My dear confederate in vice, your pardon is granted. Two sad dogs we have been. But come, give us your hand: we have used each other damnablely—for the future, we will endeavour to make each other amends.

Sir Bash. And so we will.

Love. And now I heartily congratulate the whole company that this business has had so happy a tendency to convince each of us of our folly.

Mrs. Bell. Pray, sir, don't draw me into a share of your folly.

Love. Come, come, my dear ma'am, you are not without your share of it. This will teach you for the future to be content with one lover at a time, without listening to a fellow you know nothing of, because he assumes a title, and reports well of himself.

Mrs. Bell. The reproof is just, I grant it.

Love. Come, let us join the company cheerfully, keep our own secrets, and not make ourselves the town talk.

Sir Bash. Ay, ay, let us keep the secret.

Love. What, returning to your fears again?

Sir Bash. I have done.

Love. Though, faith, if this business were known in the world, it might prove a very useful lesson: the men would see how their passions may carry them into the danger of wounding the bosom of a friend: the ladies would learn, that, after the marriage rites, they should not suffer their powers of pleasing to languish away, but should still remember to sacrifice to the Graces.

*To win a man, when all your pains succeed,
The way to keep him is a task indeed.*

Disposition of the Characters when the Curtain falls.



